

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC131
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Douglas Community Pre-School
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Douglas Community Centre, Church Road, Douglas, Cork, Co Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	T12 C840
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Jerry Roche
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	14/01/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	23	PM	No.
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Administration Office, St. Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork. T23X440
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D Cotter
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

Douglas Community Pre-School is a community operated service that caters for children aged between two and six years. It provides sessional care and the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. Daily opening hours are from 9am to 12pm. The service operates from rooms situated in the Douglas Community Centre. There are two care rooms, namely the Preschool room and the Playgroup room. There is an enclosed designated outdoor play area situated to the rear of the premises. There is an office and associated sanitary accommodations. Children also have access to the Halla at scheduled times during the day.

### Staffing

There are 7 adults attached to the service of which 5 work directly with the children. The registered provider is not service based. The person in charge is office based. On the day of the inspection there were 6 adults on the premises.

### 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/ and facilities. 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-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 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,*

*(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 service had a named person in charge and a named deputy that could deputise as required.
- (b) The deputy was on duty when the inspector arrived at the premises and the person in charge arrived on the premises at 10.50am and remained on duty for the duration of the inspection.
- (2) There were seven adults attached to the service and all seven of the files were available and open to inspection.
- (a) Of the 14 references available, 12 validated references were from past employers.
- (b) Of the 14 references available, two validated references were from a source other than a past employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all seven adults. There was evidence that the service has adhered to timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to new Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) The seven adults attached to the service were deemed to not require police vetting as they had not resided outside the State for a period of time longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4) The five staff working directly with the children held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at least at Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### 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) The registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.
- (3) On the day of inspection, the adult to child ratios were in adherence to the requirements of the regulation.

- In the Playgroup room, there were two staff working directly with 11 children aged between 3 and 4 years.
- In the Preschool room, there were three staff working directly with 12 children aged between 3.5-4.5 years.
- Of these 23 children, all were attending sessional care.

### 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 service promoted healthy eating and the food provided by the parents and guardians for the mid-morning snack was observed to be healthy and nutritious. In addition to this the service had provided fruit for the children which was on the table at the time of the inspectors arrival.
- Children's toileting and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. Self-toileting by the children was encouraged. A staff member was observed supervising and assisting where required each of the children when hand washing and hand drying.
- Children's belongings such as coats were stored on child height hooks in the entrance hall area so as to encourage independent dressing. The children were observed largely independent putting on their hats and coats prior to playing outdoors.
- A mirror was observed in each of the care rooms at child height to aid children with personal care.

##### Supporting relationships around children:

- During inspection, the staff members were calm and relaxed whilst facilitating play opportunities and carrying out caring duties. Only low tones were used, and good eye contact was observed with the children during one-to-one engagement.
- The staff members were observed to work well together and the children appeared to be familiar with the routine.

- Staff helped children to recognise and understand sharing and working together as a group as seen on day of inspection when children were involved in various activities, including tidying up. The children were observed waiting their turn, sharing the experience in relation to tabletop group activities.
- Staff were observed to interact in a caring manner with the children, building their confidence and communication skills within the setting. For example, a child became upset, and a staff member was observed to respond promptly by dropping to the child's level and engaging them in soothing conversation. While this conversation was ongoing, one of the children brought tissues and offered them to the child who was upset, displaying empathy and fostering caring relationships.
- During observed tabletop activities, the children were supported and encouraged by the staff, who acknowledged their efforts and achievements. Encouragement and praise were given often and easily.
- Wall displays included the children's art works, a family tree and a birthday chart, adding to the children's sense of identity and belonging.
- There was a designated secured outdoor play area located to the rear the premise. The area allowed the children to use the outdoor play area in all weathers as it had a retractable awning.
- The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours. Staff were observed supporting children to find positive solutions when they experienced challenge in sharing play equipment and materials. For example, in the Halla a child became upset as they had not had a turn with the football, the staff member asked the group of children to stop tidying up and to help her find a way to ensure that everyone was happy. This method of conflict resolution helps children to develop critical thinking skills, empathy and resilience.
- Transitions were handled well in the service, children were given a 5-minute warning before the end of an activity, when 5 minutes had passed the light was turned off and staff began to sing to signal the children to tidy up. When transitions are handled well it can lead to reduced stress levels amongst the children and promotes better emotional regulation.

### 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

Each of the two care rooms were suitably stocked with furniture and play equipment which was age and stage appropriate for the children. Each room contained a sufficient quantity of materials for the children attending. The layout of the room promoted the independent access to all the materials to foster children's autonomy and freedom of choice.

There was a variety of equipment to support various forms of play such as

- Modelling dough for fine motor skills.
- Jigsaws and puzzles for problem solving skills.
- Sand and water play, the children in the play group room were observed playing with ice and small world animals in a water tray. This encourages sensory and imaginative play.
- In the Halla, children were observed to play with footballs large soft foam blocks and small climbing frames to encourage gross motor skills.
- Dress up units and home corner equipment to encourage imaginative play.

### 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. A person with in date First Aid Responder (FAR) first aid training was at all times available to the children attending the preschool service, this was evidenced by the roster for the service.
2. A well-stocked first aid cabinet was secured to the wall in each of the children's care rooms. These boxes were easily identifiable and out of reach of the children. Staff informed the inspector that if they were to go on an outing, there is a smaller portable first aid stored in the office.

### 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.
- (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 The registered provider has ensured that a record in writing is kept of:
- (a) Fire drills that have taken place in each of the care rooms.
  - (b) The number type and maintenance records of firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.  
The smoke alarm was last serviced on the 31st of March 2025, and the firefighting equipment was last serviced in June 2025.
4. A copy of the fire evacuation procedure was displayed prominently in the foyer off the service.

#### Non-Compliance Information

While it is acknowledged that fire drills were carried out, they were not done so on a monthly basis. Fire drills were conducted on a room-by-room basis rather than on a whole service level. There is a risk that children would not react promptly to hearing the fire alarm in the event of an actual fire when they are not practicing on a regular basis. The last fire drill recorded in the service was in November 2025.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider stated that a new fire drill procedure has been undertaken and all children now evacuate the building at the same time. Fire drills will now be conducted monthly and overseen by the manager.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted the new template for the recording fire drills along with a synopsis of the fire drill carried out this month.

#### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The noncompliance identified under Regulation 26 has been adequately addressed.