

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC132
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Drimoleague Community Playgroup
-------------------------	---------------------------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Methodist Hall, Drimoleague, Co. Cork
----------------------------	---------------------------------------

<b>Eircode:</b>	P47 W297
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Bríd Una O' Farrell
-------------------------------------	---------------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	18/02/2025
----------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	15	PM	N/a
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate Child & Family Agency Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, West Cork P81 PD78
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. O Reilly
<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
---------------------------------	-----

### Description of service

Drimoleague Community Playgroup is a community based early years service in operation since 1996. The service provides education and care to children from 2 to 6 years offering a choice of sessional, part time or full day care service and for the children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. At time of inspection the children were aged between 3 and 6 years. The registered opening hours are from 09:15 to 12:45 Tuesday to Friday. The premises is situated within a church community hall which is located in the village of Drimoleague, Co Cork. The service offers a spacious playroom with toilet facilities, adequate storage areas, a kitchen and office. The children have access to a secured outdoor play area. There is a car park to the rear of the church and hall which offers sufficient car parking for the children to arrive and depart safely from the service with their families.

### Staffing

At time of inspection, there were 4 adults employed at the early years setting involved in the direct care of the children who attend. There was one adult employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. The registered provider is not service based. There was 1 adult on a community employment placement. Each of the 4 adults who work directly with the children hold an award in Early Childhood Care and Education.

### 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/ premises 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, 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 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) There was a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) The person in charge was present when the inspector arrived on the premises and remained for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

The recruitment records in relation to 6 adults who were employed or associated with the service were the subject of the inspection.

(a) Of the 12 required references, 8 references were from previous employers with records of validation on file.

(b) Of the remaining references, 4 references were from another source other than a previous employer with records of validation on file.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 6 staff. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d) There were 2 police vetting record on file for two adults who had resided outside of the jurisdiction for a period longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4) The 4 adults who work directly with the children in the service had achieved major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education with copies of the relevant qualifications on file.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) A sufficient number of adults were observed to work with the children who attended the service.

(2) At the time of inspection, the adult to child ratios were in adherence to the requirements of regulation. There were 15 children with 3 adults in attendance in the morning. There was a fourth adult present on a community employment placement. The adult child ratio was correct

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation the service:*

*(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*

*(i) details of staff roster on a daily basis:*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service:*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (h) A written record of the attendance of each child on a daily basis that included the arrival and departure time from the service was recorded and maintained in the service.
- (i) A weekly staff roster was maintained in the service. The staff roster indicated the names of the staff, the arrival and departure times each day.
- (k) A record book for the detailing of any accidents or incidents that occur in the service was made available. The parents had countersigned to evidence that the information had been relayed.

## 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, a relaxed and calm environment was provided for the children, and it was observed that the adults spoke kindly and offered encouragement to each child.
- 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. The mid-morning snack was a sociable and unhurried event. Children assisted with preparing the table such as the laying of individual laminated place mats, cutlery and plates.
- Staff were observed to demonstrate patience and kindness in their interactions with the children, as was noted when the children's efforts were readily acknowledged.
- Children were encouraged and supported to develop independence regarding personal care and life skills. Each child had their own coat hook and space for bags and coats in the service entrance hall area and children were largely independent putting on their hats and coats prior to playing outdoors.
- The children were observed largely independent using the toilet and were supported appropriately by the adults to use the toilet, if necessary.
- Children had sufficient space to move about freely indoors and outdoors.
- Ongoing observations linked to Aistear, the curriculum framework, were furnished to the inspector. There was evidence of monthly observations. These documented the children's development and inclusion of the children's emergent interest and were stored in each child's individual journal.
- The service operated in partnership with parents and communication with parents is at drop off and collection time. Communication with parents about service issues was conducted via digital applications both in group and individual form.

### PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL ENVIRONMENT:

- The playroom was spacious, child-friendly, bright, and well-presented.
- The indoor environment of the playroom was laid out in a considered and thematic way to encourage a vast variety of play experiences. There was a home corner with a wide range of utensils, such as baby dolls and dress up. Children were observed bathing dolls in a play bath
- A nature table displayed seasonal leaves, cones and feathers to encourage the children's curiosity and learning about Spring. A section of the room was allocated to arts and crafts. Children were seen enjoying colouring a daffodil as part of celebrating the spring season and the remains of the arts and crafts from Valentines Day the previous week was also present.
- Tabletop activities encouraged fine motor skill practice such as beading and small construction play.
- The layout of the rooms promotes the independent access to all the materials to foster children's autonomy and freedom of choice
- The walls of the service were decorated with murals of the village shops, posters, birthday charts and family photographs and the arts and crafts from Valentines Day the previous week were also present.
- An area was cornered off with a soft floor mat and soft seating beside the reading area to facilitate quiet time.
- As the playroom is located in a community setting, many of the wooden storage units are on wheels to allow movement of play equipment into the administration room for other community activities on some afternoons and on the weekend.
- There was a designated outdoor play area provided beside the premise. The outdoor play area had an all-weather surface and artificial grass surface. A number of resources providing opportunities for practicing gross motor skills such as cycling, kicking, throwing and sliding were available in the outdoor play area from resources including a climbing frame, see saws, push and ride on toys and balls. The children were observed to be appropriately dressed while playing outdoors on day of inspection.

## Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

### Regulation 22 – Food and drink

*A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

- The parents provided the food for the mid-morning snack which was observed to be healthy and nutritious with appropriate portion size. It was served on a rolling basis according to the wishes of the children. It was observed to be comprised of filled sandwiches, crackers, fruit, cheese, and yoghurts. The preferred drink was water.
- Perishable foods were refrigerated in the kitchen.

## 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:

- Entry to the service was possible via the main door and this was observed secure when not in use on day of inspection. This minimised the risk of unauthorised persons gaining access to the premises and reduced the likelihood of a child exiting, while unsupervised
- The outdoor play area was securely enclosed by a combination of a timber fence and secured gate was observed when the children were playing outdoors.
- All of the available cleaning agents were stored out of children's reach.

##### Infection Control:

- Throughout the service, wash hand basins were equipped with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towel dispensers, for hygienic hand washing and drying. Handwashing by the children was observed before mid-morning snack, after toileting.
- Lidded, foot pedal operated bins were available for waste and disposal of single used papers towels throughout the service.
- Fridges were available for the storage of perishable items in both playrooms.

## Fire Safety:

- Fire exit doors were noted to be maintained free from any obstructions.

## Outing:

- An outing from the childcare facility did not take place at the time of inspection.

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

- Garda vetting was available for six staff members. However, two of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

- Copies of the two renewed Garda vetting records were forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate. In the written response the person in charge has stated that yearly checks will be done by both Manager and Chairperson to ensure that all vetting disclosures are in date and to identify any which will need renewing in the coming year.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

- A copy of the two renewed Garda vetting records were reviewed and deemed satisfactory

## Summary Comment

- Correspondence and records received were examined and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation 23, General Safety of the Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

## 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) The registered provider did ensure that there were staff available at all times with appropriate first aid responder (FAR) training. The FAR certifications on file indicated that one staff member held current up to date training. The paediatric certificates on file indicated that three staff held current up to date training.

(2)

(a) The first aid boxes were safely stored out of children's reach in the service. The first aid box was stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises

(b) The fully equipped first aid box was available at all times to adults if in the event that a child may require treatment.

### 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)
- (a) A record of monthly fire drills carried out was available and indicated that the last fire drill took place on the 05/02/2025
  - (b) A record of the number, type and maintenance record of firefighting equipment was maintained. It was recorded that the fire equipment was last serviced on the 15 October 2024 and the fire alarm was last tested and serviced in February 2025.
- (4)
- The fire evacuation procedure for the service which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the service.

### 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 the service was adequately insured, with insurance for 22 sessional children until 27/03/2025. The records detailed the category of service covered which was full day care, the name and address of the premises and details regarding public liability cover, fire, theft, buildings, and outings cover.