

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC133		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Drinagh Community Playgroup CLG		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Derryclough National School, Drinagh, Co. Cork		
<b>Eircode:</b>	P47 YY30		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Nicola Collins		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	08/09/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	20	PM n/a
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Department, Child & Family Agency, Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, Co Cork P81 PD78		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	M. O Reilly		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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

Drinagh Community Playgroup CLG is a community-based service, that provides sessional care and is registered to accommodate children aged 2 to 6 years. The service currently caters for children from the age of 2 years 6 months to 6 years and for children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. While the service is registered to operate between 09:00 and 12:30 hours. Daily opening hours are from 09:00 to 12:00 hours each day Monday to Friday. The service operates from a room located in the main building of Derryclough National School. The national school premise is a detached one storey building located in a rural setting. There is one spacious classroom and an adequate number of children's toilets and a nappy changing facility located beside the entrance hall area. There is one designated staff toilet. The children have access to an extensive outdoor play area situated on the grounds of the national school. The outdoor play area is located to the front and side of the school.

### Staffing

There were 8 adults associated with the service, this included the named registered provider who is not service based. There was 1 of the 6 staff employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. Two of the 6 staff appointed covered staff holiday and sick leave cover. There was one adult attending on a community employment placement scheme. The 6 staff who worked directly with the early years children all hold a recognised qualification 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
- (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) There was a named person in charge and a named deputy available to deputise as required.
  - (b) The person in charge and the deputy were present on the premises on day of the inspection.
  - (c) There was a clear management structure in place in the service.
- (2) Documentation was assessed in relation to the requirements of Regulation 9 for 7 adults associated with the service. The following records were available for the 8 adults:
- (a) Of the required 16 references, 14 references were from previous employers with records of validation on file.
  - (b) The remaining 2 references were from another source other than a previous employer with records of the required validation on file.

(c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of the 8 adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) A police vetting record was on file for the one staff member who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(4)  
There was evidence that the 6 staff members had attained a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework for Qualifications, or a qualification deemed 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 policies were examined and deemed to meet the requirements:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Healthy Eating Policy
- Administration of Medication Policy

### 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 person in charge ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children in the playroom on day of the inspection.

(3)

During the period of inspection, the ratio of staff to children was maintained as per the regulations and an adequate number of adults were working directly with the children.

There were 20 children present in the morning sessional service with 4 adults in attendance at all times. The adult child ratio exceeded the requirements. The person in charge stated that it is a practise in the service for the last few years, that for the first few weeks of the preschool year, the adult child ratio is high to assist with the needs of the children settling into the service. The person in charge stated this practise has worked well, this was observed on day of inspection. The inspection took place on the first day of the second week for the children settling in and all were familiar with the daily routine, and the needs of the children were being met while attending the service.

### 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 to the service:*

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis.*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent.*
- (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 in attendance each day, the arrival and departure times.
- (j) Administration of medication record was found to meet the requirements. Written parental consent to administer the medication had been received.
- (k) There was a hard copy Accident and Incident record book in the service. The Accident and Incident template included once signed, a duplicate copy of each accident and incident record for the parent /guardian.

### 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.
- The mid-morning meal was observed to be a social occasion, as the children chatted freely in a relaxed environment. One staff member sat at each table and had their own lunch break with the children at mid-morning snack time. The staff offered appropriate assistance for example assisting with the opening of cartons as required and encouraging the disposal of rubbish in the correct bin.
- Toileting was gently supervised by staff members and children were encouraged to independently wash hands, flush toilets and discard of paper towels. The staff members were observed to assist where required each of the children when hand washing and hand drying. The children were supported and encouraged prior to eating, post messy play, toileting and outdoor play.
- Staff were observed to interact in a caring manner with the children building their confidence and communication skills within the setting. Staff helped children to recognise and understand the rules for being together in a group as seen on day of inspection when staff were observed explaining to the children the fire drill procedure, walking in a group together to the fire assembly point and the alarm sound that the children will recognise/associate with a fire drill while in the service. The staff were also observed assisting the children when required to help gain independence when putting on their hats, coats and outdoor booties prior to outdoor play.
- During observed tabletop activities, the children were supported and encouraged by the staff, who acknowledged their efforts and achievements.
- It was reported by the person in charge that daily photographs of the children were taken whilst participating in activities and immediately sent on individually via a digital application to parents so as to stimulate conversation when the child arrived home and provide opportunity for them to talk about their play activities while in the service.

### Physical and Material Environment

- The playroom was airy and bright with dual aspect openable windows to allow for natural ventilation and light and more importantly, they provided the children with ongoing views of the surrounding countryside. The windows were sparkling clean as they had been cleaned prior to the service opening.
- The spacious care room afforded children the ability to move freely, as they participated in various activities, such as colouring and drawing, imaginary play and tabletop activities.
- The playroom had fixed open shelving units that were anchored to the walls to display the wide range of play materials and equipment in an accessible way to the children.
- There were multiple tabletop activities to encourage fine motor skill play such as peg boards, threading and small construction bricks.
- Imaginative and pretend play activities included doctor/nurse sets, a hair saloon, office equipment, shops and home corner to allow the children to practice dramatic play in a sociable way with their friends.
- The playroom was furnished in one corner with low couches, matting and soft toys and a wide selection of books for the children's comfort.
- The room was furnished with sufficient child sized tables and chairs.
- There was an outdoor play area provided beside the premise located within the grounds of the primary school. The children had direct access to a large outdoor play area; this included a hard surface area so that the children could practice gross motor skills on the numerous ride on items, such as bikes, balance scooters, tractors and cars. There was a large, grassed garden provided with a number of well-equipped interest areas for example, a mud kitchen with utensils, a large construction corner suitably equipped for the children to dig, and enjoy the dumpers, trucks and miniature farm vehicles.
- There was a fixed wood tractor for the children to enjoy driving practice, a fixed wooden boat and a large swing. There was a reading area and child size wooden benches, the person in charge stated they have mid-morning snack outdoors sometimes weather permitting.
- There were many tyres for the children to practice balance games and a sand unit with accompanying play equipment.
- A roofed wooden gazebo had been installed to provide an outside playroom; this was furnished with couches, books, small construction, and a play kitchen with utensils.

## 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 children’s parents and guardians provided all food items and the children had their own water bottle.
- Lunches were stored in snack boxes and stored in the service fridge.
- Healthy, nutritious lunches were observed being eaten at the mid-morning snack such as sandwiches, rolls wraps, meat and cheese sandwiches, yogurts, dips and cheese biscuits and a selection of fruits and chopped and diced vegetables.

## 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:

- On the inspector’s arrival at the service, the entrance door was found to have been secured and was maintained secure when not in use. The service has their own entrance door within the school which has a key coded pad to gain access.
- Doors to the office and the adult toilet were also suitable secured to prevent the children accessing unsupervised.
- There were no cleaning agents accessible to the children.
- The first aid box was appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.
- Water temperatures at the wash hand basins were thermostatically controlled, so as not to exceed 43°C. Recorded water temperatures in the wash hand basins in the children’s toilets were 29°C on day of inspection.
- Openable windows were not accessible to the children in the playroom and children’s toilet area.
- Prior to outdoor play the area and equipment were checked for any hazardous items or breakages. The front gates were secured so that the children could not access the main road whilst using the playground.

## Infection Control:

- Suitable handwashing facilities was available in the toilets and nappy changing facilities. Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were in place. There are two children's toilets and one designated staff toilet. The wall mounted nappy changing mat is located within the adult toilet. They were clean and well maintained with toilet tissue, clean step ups and toilet seats available for the children's comfort.
- Handwashing by the children was observed before mid-morning snack, after messy play, toileting and outdoor play.
- Pedal operated bins were in place for the disposal of paper towels.
- The premises was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition and corresponding cleaning records were available.
- Tables were observed to be sanitised before and after snack time.
- Children's coats and bags were stored on child height hooks in the lobby of the school so as to encourage independent dressing and organisation of their arts and crafts for home time.

## Administration of Medication:

- There were children attending the service that were currently in receipt of specifically prescribed medication.
- It was reported that staff members were familiar with the procedure to be followed when administering medication to a child. Some of the staff had recently attended training in the administration of a certain medication. Staff training certificates on the administration of the medication were available on site on day of inspection.

## 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 ensured that there were staff available at all times with appropriate first aid responder (FAR) training. The FAR certification on file indicated that one staff member held current up to date training.
- (2)
- (a) The first aid box was 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 day of inspection 08 September 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 16 April 2025 and the emergency fire alarm system was last tested and serviced on the 01 September 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 a maximum of 22 children until 27/03/2026. The records detailed the category of service covered which was sessional, the name and address of the premises and details regarding public liability cover, fire, theft, buildings, and outings cover.