

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC135
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Dromina Community Playschool
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Ashbrook, Dromina, Charleville, Co. Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	P56 NH77
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Moira Quinn
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	19/06/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	17	PM	13
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Second Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
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<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	F Collins
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<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector
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### 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>	Not applicable
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### Description of service

Dromina Community Playschool is a community-based preschool service in operation since 2007.

The service operates from of a purpose-built single-story facility in a quiet residential area off the main road in the village of Dromina. The service is within walking distance of the local national school.

The service provided includes part time and sessional care for children aged from 2 to 6 years from 08.00 to 13.00 daily with the seasonal service operating from 09.00 to 12.00.

The service is registered to provide school aged childcare.

The service operates for 38 weeks of the year and can cater for 22 preschool children at any one time.

The service has a registered school aged service for the children attending the local national school.

There are 2 care rooms, and a kitchen, office and both children's and adult toilet facilities. There are two outdoor play spaces on the premises. One to the front of the building and a larger developed play area to the rear of the building.

### Staffing

There were five staff employed in the service. The person in charge works in the office or supernumerary if required. In addition to this there were four qualified staff working directly with the children.

The staff working with the children were appropriately qualified between level 5 and level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework.

### 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under:

Regulation 9 (1), (2) (3) & (4)

Regulation 10

Regulation 11 (1) (2)

Regulation 19 (1) (a)

Regulation 22

Regulation 23

Regulation 30 (1) and

Regulation 32 (1)

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 registered provider, 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 ensured that there was a person in charge in the service during the operation of the service. On the day of inspection, the named deputy person in charge was onsite when the inspector arrived and the person in charge arrived later in the morning. Should the person in charge or the named deputy not be onsite the registered provider had a further named person available to act in the position of person in charge. The registered provider did not work in the service.
  - (b) The staff roster indicated there was at all times a named a person in charge or a named deputy onsite.

(c) All staff were aware of the management structure within the service and staff could name who would be in charge in the event the person in charge or the deputy were not available.

(2) There were five adults named as being available to work in the service. All five staff files were assessed.

(a) Of the 10 references required, seven validated references were available from past employers.

(b) Two validated references were available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Up to date Garda Vetting was available on file for each of the five staff named as working in the service.

(d) Police vetting was not required for any staff.

(4) Four staff that work with the children daily were qualified at Level 5 to Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(a) One reference from a past employer had not been validated appropriately. Not ensuring references are appropriately validated may lead to staff not being suitable having access to children.

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

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

(2) (a) The reference as identified has been validated by the person in charge. A system of checking all staff prior to them commencing in the service.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

(2) (a) The reference and the checklist have been received.

### Summary Comment

The requirements for the regulation as inspected have been met.

## 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 reviewed and were in keeping with up-to-date practice:

The infection control policy.

The complaints 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.*

*(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) The registered provider ensured that there were adequate staff available to care for the children at all times.

(2) There were four staff working directly with 17 children in the morning of the inspection and with 13 children during the part-time hours between 12 and 1pm. One of the staff had been employed under the access and inclusion model scheme.

### 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's needs were met around food and drink provision. Snacks were served at 10.30 am for the morning session and lunch was served at 12.30. Drinks of water were available to the children throughout the day. One child who indicated they were hungry before snack time was given their snack and a staff member sat with them to help as required.
- The temperature of the care room was at 21.8°C. The windows were open to allow for ventilation and ensure the comfort of the children.
- The older children toileted independently and assistance was given with the younger children who needed reminders with hand washing and with their clothing.
- Care was given to the personal care of the children with children's noses cleaned as needed.
- Children were allowed to rest and opt out of activities as they wished and the comfortable rest area that had been developed with children's sized couches and mats was used by the children throughout the morning.
- The children were free to move about and access the equipment independently.
- No child required sleep on the day of inspection however the staff could detail where and when the beds would be set up in the smaller care room to ensure children that required sleep could be afforded same.

##### Supporting Relationships:

- The children were supported by the staff at snack time when a staff member sat at each table and provided support to the children when required.
- The service communicated with parents daily at drop off and collection. A staff member was observed to wait at the gate for all children to arrive and talk with the parents. This process was repeated in the afternoon, where the staff were observed to talk to parents when handing over the children.
- Each child was supported to participate in each activity, and it was observed when some needed more help this was offered.

- Activities that have been completed in the service were displayed in the children's scrapbooks.
- The children knew each of the staff and sought their help when needed. A child who had difficulty in communication was observed to have support in non-verbal communication where the child's needs were met.
- A family wall was displayed in the care room and this ensured children could source support from photographs of family when needed.
- A child who had been assessed for additional supports had a plan developed to support them in their care needs.

### **Physical and Material Environment:**

- The layout of the indoor environment allowed for the children to use their imagination in choosing and doing activities. There were areas of interest, and these were grouped so children could play in small and large groups.
- Child height tables were accessible, and the children could sit at these in comfort and participate in colouring, playing with moulding clay or when playing with small dress up dolls.
- Gross motor development was encouraged outside when using the climbing frame and slide, or when using the grass area and the ride on toys.
- Fine motor development was encouraged through use of arts and crafts, blocks and bricks and outside using the mud kitchen and water wall.
- Sensory play was developed using moulding clay and the use of large sand trays where the children had access to sand toys.

### **Programme of Activities:**

- The children were observed to participate in a schedule of activities such as free play, outdoor activities and circle time activities. All were to promote the sensory, language and motor awareness of each child.
- There was a language rich environment noted with children encouraged to talk, recite and participate in stories.

### Outdoor Environment:

- The outdoor environment consisted of two areas. The area outside the care room door was divided into an area for a yard, where the sand tray was placed. An artificial grass area where there was a climbing frame slide and hammock seat.
- There was evidence of planting vegetables and sun flowers which the children had taken home.
- The grass area at the rear of the building had a tunnel and a shed which was set up to be used for circle time in bad weather.
- There was a large bark mulch area where there was a water wall and a mud kitchen with appropriate resources to play with.

### 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 registered provider ensured that the food available in the service was suitable.

Morning snack was provided by parents/guardians and was noted to be healthy. A variety of food inclusive of crackers, cheese, sandwiches, fruit and yogurts was supplied. The staff ensured that each child drank water and where a drinks bottle had not come in from home, a jug of water and glasses were available. The staff were observed to distribute water to the children. The day of inspection was hot, and it was observed that the staff also ensured to take water outside and encourage children to take drinks.

The mid-day meal was provided by the service and served at 12.15. This consisted of beans on toast and sliced fruit; apples and oranges. Each child was served with a drink of water and encouraged to drink this.

### 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 doors into the service were secured with electromagnetic locks and no child could leave the premises unattended.
- The window openings were out of the reach of the children and had safety devices on them to ensure no child could climb out the window.
- The electric cables were out of reach of the children and were made safe.
- The toys assessed were safe and did not appear to have any pinch or crush points.
- The cleaning equipment was stored out of reach of the children on a high shelf in the larger care room or under the sink in the kitchen where the children did not have access.
- There was no full-length glass door which may cause an injury to a child.
- No hot drinks were consumed by the staff near the children.
- The outdoor area was fenced and was secured to ensure no child could leave unaccompanied. A new higher fence had been erected on the front wall and in the outdoor grass area to further enhance the safety of the outdoor space and prevent climbing on the wall by the children.

##### Infection Control:

- All the food for snack and lunchtime was stored in the fridge to prevent contamination of the perishable items.
- The bags and coats for the children were stored off the ground on accessible hooks.
- The windows were opened to ensure good air circulation.
- The service was cleaned daily, and the cleaning sheets were signed by the staff for the care rooms, sanitary areas and kitchen.
- The rubbish was inaccessible both inside and outside. Inside all bins were lidded and pedal operated. Outside the bins were secured in a storage area and inaccessible to the children.
- Tables were cleaned with appropriate disinfectant after tabletop activities and before snack and lunch time and children's meals were served on plates.
- The play equipment outside was cleaned by the staff before the children went outside.

- There was hot water in the sinks in the children’s toilets in the care room and in the adult toilet. The water temperatures recorded in the children’s sinks was 20.3 and 20°C respectively. The temperature of the water in the sink in the care room was recorded at 43.4°C.
- There was liquid hand soap and paper towels beside each of the sinks in use.
- The staff were observed to remind the children to wash their hands before snack and lunch time and after using the toilet and after messy play.

**Administration of Medication:**

- No medication was observed to be administered during the inspection.

**Safe Sleep:**

- No child was observed to sleep in the service on the day of the inspection.

**Fire Safety:**

- The fire door exiting into the outdoor play area was accessible and was secured with electromagnetic locks.
- The firefighting equipment was accessible to the staff.

**Non-Compliance Information**

**General Safety:**

1. Garda vetting was available for five staff members. However, one vetting disclosure was not dated within the last three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice ‘EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting’ ensuring all staff are Garda vetted every three years to ensure staff suitable to care for children are working in the service.

**Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

**Corrective & Preventive Action**

**General Safety:**

1. The Garda vetting for one staff member has been renewed in keeping with the Regulatory notice as indicated above.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

**General Safety:**

1. A copy of the Garda vetting disclosure has been received along with a spread sheet to indicate when staffs Garda vetting and key training is out of date to ensure all staff have the appropriate vetting and training.

**Summary Comment**

The requirements for this Regulation as inspected have been met.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### Regulation 30 - Minimum space requirements

*(1) Subject to paragraphs (2) to (6), a registered provider shall ensure that adequate clear floor space is available in the premises for the work, play and movement of children attending the pre-school service.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured there was adequate space available to the children registered to attend.

The large care room measured 49.45SqM

The small care room measured 17.6SqM.

## Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

### Regulation 32 – Complaints

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*

- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
- (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
- (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The complaints policy set out the procedure that must be followed should a person wish to make a complaint about the service.
  - (b) The policy indicated how the complaint would be dealt with.
  - (c) The policy indicated how the person making the complaint would be kept informed.