

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC212
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Name of Service:	Leap and Glandore Community Pre-School
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Address of Service:	C/O Leap Nationals School, Main Street, Leap, Co. Cork
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Eircode:	P81 NY10
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Name of Registered Provider:	Luighsighe Carey
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	10/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	7
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Department, Child & Family Agency, Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, Co Cork P81 PD78
Inspection undertaken by:	M. O Reilly
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
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Description of service

Leap and Glandore Community Pre-School is a community-based service, that provides sessional and part time care and is registered to cater for children aged 2 to 6 years. The service currently caters for children from the age of 2 years 8 months to 6 years and for children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme. Daily opening hours are from 09:15 to 14:00 Monday to Thursday and from 09:15 to 12:30pm on Friday. This school year, a part time service is in operation Monday to Thursday and a sessional service is in operation five days a week. The service operates from one designated classroom within the main building of the primary school located in the rural village of Leap, Co Cork. The service has access to a spacious partially covered outdoor area beside the service, which is located within the grounds of the school. There were designated children's toilets. The adults have access to a staff toilet within the school building. There is sufficient car parking to allow for the safe arrival and departure of the children with their families.

Staffing

There were 3 staff employed to work directly with the early years children. The registered provider is not service based. There was 1 of the 3 staff employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) Support Scheme. The staff who work 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) The service had a person in charge and a person to deputise as required.
- (b) The named person in charge was present on the premises on day of the inspection.
- (2) Documentation was assessed in relation to the requirements of Regulation 9 for 3 staff members and the registered provider. The following records were available for the 4 adults:
- (a) Of the required 8 references on file, all 8 validated references were from previous employers.
- (b) Not applicable, as all references were from a previous employer.
- (c) A Garda vetting disclosure was available on file in respect of the 4 adults. 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) Two police vetting records were on file for the 2 staff who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.
- (4)
- There was evidence that the 3 staff members that worked directly with the children had attained a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework for Qualifications.

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

(2)
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 in the playroom. There were 19 children present with 3 adults in attendance in the sessional service and there were 7 children in the afternoon with 3 adults in attendance until 1:30pm and then 2 staff until 2pm. 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 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.
- (k) The service had an Accident and Incident book. There were no recent entries, however historical entries were correctly recorded and had been countersigned by a parent to evidence that information had been duly received by the parent.

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 snack was a sociable and unhurried event. The staff were each observed sitting with the children and having their own mid-morning snack with the children. Lots of positive interacting observed between the children and staff, building the children's confidence and communication skills within the setting and promoting socialisation.
- 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's toileting and hygiene needs were promptly and sensitively attended to. Self-toileting by the children was encouraged. The staff members were observed to assist where required each of the children when hand washing and hand drying, and the children were supported and encouraged prior to eating, post toileting and outdoor play.
- Children were encouraged and supported to develop independence regarding personal care and life skills. Each child had their own coat hook located on the corridor wall beside the playroom. The children were largely independent putting on their hats, coats and wellies prior to playing outdoors.
- The service operated in partnership with parents, regular updates and information were furnished to parents and guardians via the services electronic system and at drop off and collection times.
- 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 were stored in each child's individual journal.

Physical and Material Environment

- The spacious care room afforded children the ability to move freely, as they participated in various activities, such as art and crafts, imaginary play and tabletop activities.

- The indoor environment of the playroom was laid out in defined interest areas, including home, construction, arts and crafts, reading and tabletop activities areas. The room was laid out in a manner to encourage thematic play and provide a wide range of opportunities and play experiences. The layout of the room promoted the independent access to all the materials to foster children’s autonomy and freedom of choice.
- Tabletop activities observed included painting a rainbow following on from a song that was played to the children all about the rainbow during the morning session.
- Messy play was observed where children were playing with rice that was coloured with the colours of the Irish flag to celebrate the patron saint of Ireland, St Patrick. At story time a story was read to the children all about St Patrick.
- Child size couches were available beside the book area where books were displayed at child height and children were each seen taking a book as part of the daily routine after the mid-morning snack.
- The walls of the playroom displayed family photographs, birthday chart and the children’s arts and crafts
- The service was observed clean, bright, and well maintained and the openable windows allowed for natural light and ventilation.
- The children had access to an outdoor play area located within the grounds of the primary school. The service used the outdoor play area in rota with the other classrooms on the school. The outdoor area had a combination of an all-weather surface area, and a spacious tarmac covered area. A number of resources were present providing opportunities for practicing gross motor skills such as cycling, kicking, throwing and sliding. Resources included a balance beam, a selection of push and ride on toys and play balls. Sensory play included pipes, a planting area, two separate units, one with sand and the other bark mulch with utensils for the children to enjoy digging and spilling. The children were observed appropriately dressed while playing outdoors.

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, the children had their own water bottle.
- Lunches were stored in snack boxes and stored in the service fridge. A second lunch box was provided for the children attending part time and stored in the fridge.
- Healthy, nutritious lunches were observed being eaten at the mid-morning snack such as sandwiches, rice cakes, rolls, yogurts, a selection of fruits and chopped and diced vegetables.
- Children remaining in the service on a part time basis were served an additional healthy snack at lunch time.

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 main entrance door was found to have been secured and was maintained secure when not in use.
- There were no cleaning agents accessible to the children.
- The first aid box was appropriately stored and inaccessible to children.
- Emergency fire exit doors were unobstructed.
- 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 25°C on day of inspection.
- There were no cables or trailing flexes within the children’s reach in the playroom in operation.
- The outdoor play area was adequately secured when the children were observed playing outdoors.

- There is one section cornered off in the playroom by cupboards and a gate that is a kitchenette and administration area.

Infection Control:

- Suitable handwashing facilities was available in the playrooms, toilet facilities. Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were in place.
- Handwashing by the children was observed before mid-morning snack and after toileting, messy play 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.

Safe Sleep:

- The service was categorised as a part time service and a sleep facility was made available for the children to sleep and rest if they so wished. This consisted of mats, blankets and linen. No child required a sleep on day of inspection. There was soft seating provided beside the book area that encouraged children to sit and relax when reading or to opt out of activities if they so wished while attending the service.

Fire Safety:

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

Outing:

- No outings took place at time of inspection

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

- Garda vetting was available for four adults. However, one 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

In the corrective and preventative response (CAPA) received from the person in charge the following was stated:

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- The process of re-vetting of one adult was completed. The service will review the staff garda vetting records annually to ensure that all garda vetting records are updated on time and every three years for staff and the registered provider.

Supporting documentation submitted

- The Early Years Inspectorate received written evidence that the Garda vetting had been processed by the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána.

Summary Comment

- Correspondence forwarded to the Early Years Inspectorate was examined and deemed to meet the requirement of Regulation 23 General Safety of the Childcare 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 persons in charge 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 a current up to date training.

(2)

(a) The first aid box was 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 24 February 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 02 November 2024 and the fire alarm was last tested and serviced on the 02 October 2024.
- (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 27/03/2025. The records detailed the category of service covered which was part time care, the name and address of the premises and details regarding public liability cover, fire, theft, buildings, and outings cover.