

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE030
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Name of Service:	Cois Ceim Creche
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Address of Service:	Rathbaun, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V95 HV59
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Name of Registered Provider:	Marie Urquahart
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date(s) of Inspection:	01/07/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	32	PM	22
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla, Child & Family Agency, Primary Care Building, Station Road, Ennis, Co. Clare
Inspection undertaken by:	J Hayes & A McCarthy
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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	Not applicable
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Description of service

Coys Céim creche was established in 2008 as full day care, part time and sessional care community service in Lisdoonvarna, County Clare. The service operates Monday to Friday from 08:00 hrs to 18:00 hrs and cares for pre-school children aged 0 to 6 years. The service is located in a single storey building with childcare provided in six care rooms. Three of the six care rooms were in operation on 01 July 2025. Children have access to a separate sleep room in the service. A kitchen, a dining room and a staff room are also available on the premises. An enclosed outdoor play area is located to the front and sides of the premises and is divided for the different age groups of children.

Staffing

The registered provider is the chairperson of the management committee for the service and is not involved in the day to day operation. On the 01 July 2025 the manager and assistant manager, two auxiliary staff who prepare, cook and serve the meals and clean the premises and 5 adults who worked directly with the children were present. During the inspection the manager provided an administrative role and relief cover in the care rooms during breaktime. Two additional adults cared for the school age children who were present on the day.

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 and safety.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (4)

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (2) (8)(a)

Regulation 19 - Health, welfare and development of child (1)(a)

Regulation 23 - Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25 - First aid (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26 - Fire safety measures (1)(a)(b)(4)

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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.

Additional Information

02 July 2025

An Immediate Action Notice was issued under Regulation 9(2)(c). A mandatory Garda vetting disclosure was not available for two adults who were present in the service contrary to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012.

A response was received on the 03 July 2025. The manager submitted a garda vetting disclosure in respect of one adult and confirmed that the second adult would not be working in the service until a Garda Vetting disclosure had been received and assessed. The manager confirmed that a copy of the outstanding Garda Vetting disclosure would be submitted to the inspectorate. A copy of the garda vetting disclosure in respect of the second adult was submitted on 08 July 2025.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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) A designated person in charge of operating the service was present on the day of the inspection. There was a named person available who was able to deputise if required.

(b) During the period of the inspection, the service manager was present.

(c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the lines of authority and accountability and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee.

(2)(a)(b) Two written and validated references were available for the registered provider and 19 adults employed to work at the service. References were submitted by staff from either their past employers or from other reputable sources.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for the registered provider and 17 of the 19 adults employed to work at the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for four adults who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than six consecutive months.

(4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education or an equivalent such qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(c) Contrary to the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012 Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were not available for 2 adults who had recently commenced employment at the service. On the 02 July an immediate action notice was issued to the service.

(d) Police vetting was not available for three adults who had resided outside of Ireland for longer than six consecutive months. The translation of a police vetting documentation in respect of one adult was not available.

Potentially not having staff appropriately vetted prior to them commencing in the service may allow inappropriate adults have access to children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(c) Garda vetting disclosures in respect of both adults were submitted to the early years inspectorate. It was confirmed that the adults would not be working in the service until a Garda Vetting disclosure had been received and assessed. The service will ensure that all adults are Garda vetted before being permitted access to children.

(d)

The three adults have applied for the police vetting.

All adults will be required to have full translated police vetting going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

- (2)(c) A copy of the garda vetting disclosures in respect of the two adults was submitted.
- (d) Documentary evidence of the outstanding police clearance was submitted in respect of one adult.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive action responses and the evidence submitted was reviewed.

9 (2)(c)

The non compliances are addressed.

(2)(d)

A copy of the completed International Police vetting for two adults has not been submitted to the inspector to date. The registered provider is required to furnish the required documentation to the Inspectorate upon receipt. The noncompliance in relation to regulation 9(2)(d) remains out outstanding.

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.*
- (8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*
- (a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of inspection there were 6 adults caring for 32 pre-school children. The adult to child ratio was correct overall in the facility.
- (2)
- On the 01 July 2025 the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained. 6 adults cared for the 32 children in attendance in the morning and 5 adults cared for 22 children in the afternoon. The service manager was also available to cover staff breaks and administration duties.
- (8)(a)
- The staff roster demonstrated that more than two adults were available in the childcare facility at all times

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 of Children:

The adults treated the children in a respectful manner and positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions. The adults praised and encouraged the children, conversed with the children at their level, used soft tones of voice, and responded promptly to their cues for assistance and comfort. The children were encouraged to be independent in play and learning, whilst caring for their belongings, at mealtime and whilst using the toilet. The adults supervised and treated the children in a respectful manner during nappy changes and toileting. The children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care and were supported by the adults when assistance was required.

The children's sleep was attended to on an individual basis, and an alternative area and activities were offered for children who did not wish to sleep.

The infants were encouraged to feed themselves and promoted to be independent. Appropriate crockery and feeding utensils were provided at mealtimes which were observed to be relaxed and sociable occasions. Meals were prepared and cooked at the service. Drinks of water were freely available to children throughout the day in each room. The children transitioned from the indoor to the outdoor area for play based activities and transitioned to a dining room for meals.

Non-Compliance Information

Physical and Material Environment:

The outdoor play area was not sufficiently resourced with toys and play and educational based materials and equipment to support all children's learning and development.

- The outdoor play area to the front of the premises was used by the pre-school children in the morning and had a very limited amount of play equipment available for use. The children brought toys from the indoor playroom to the outdoor play area to the rear of the premises to support their play as there was a limited quantity of toys and equipment in this area also.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Physical and Material Environment:

The service has reviewed and assessed the outdoor areas and added additional resources to enhance the spaces. The service will link with a national quality development service to review and enhance the outdoor area. Regular reviews of the outdoor area will take place.

Supporting documentation submitted

Physical and Material Environment:

Photographic evidence was submitted.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance under Regulation 19 has been addressed.

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 inspection the following was observed:

The entrance door was appropriately secured with a magnetic lock to prevent children from accessing unsafe areas or allowing unsupervised access to the building.

The front entrance gate to the service had a three point access system fitted.

The highchairs used by the younger children if required at mealtimes were in good condition and fitted with safety harnesses.

The outdoor areas were secured with fencing and gates to protect the children within.

The children were signed in and out on arrival and departure to the service on the childcare electronic application system.

Storage facilities were secured and inaccessible to the children.

The blind cords were appropriately secured to the windows throughout the service.

Infection Control:

The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition. Completed cleaning schedules were available demonstrating measures taken by staff to clean and maintain the service.

The sanitary facilities were equipped with liquid soap, hand paper towels and lidded, lined pedal operated bins. Suitable nappy changing areas were available, and a nappy changing procedure was clearly displayed on the wall close to the change mats.

The children were supported by staff to wash their hands at appropriate intervals such as after activities, using the toilet and outdoor play and before mealtime.

Administration of Medication:

The adults demonstrated an awareness of the service's administration of medication policy and procedure. Documentation was available for the adults to record medication administered to the children in attendance

Safe Sleep:

A safe sleep policy was in place at the service and the adults demonstrated an awareness of the policy and adhered to the best practise sleep guidelines for all children under 2 years of age.

Standard sized cots and beds were used.

The children's sleep observations were recorded by the adults every 10 minutes on the electronic records. These observations included the children's colour, position and breathing.

Low level beds with individual blankets and bedlinen were available for the older children who required sleep.

An electronic thermometer was available for the adults to measure and monitor the room temperatures

Fire Safety:

The adults had evidence on file of up-to-date fire safety training.

The fire exit routes and passageways were clear from obstruction.

The fire exits routes and fire assembly points were readily identified with signage.

A fire action notice was displayed at all the fire exit points in the building.

The service demonstrated evidence of completing monthly fire drills to prepare the service to respond in the event of fire.

Outing:

The person in charge of the service stated that outings are not undertaken by the childcare facility.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

Cold water only was available at the wash hand basins throughout the service. The water temperatures were recorded at temperatures ranging from 18 to 18.4 degrees Celsius. This posed a risk of cross infection as thermostatically controlled hot water was not available to support hygienic hand washing by the children or staff.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

The service engaged a plumber to ensure warm water is available at the wash hand basins and the water temperature will be checked on a daily basis.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

The invoice from the plumber was submitted.

Summary Comment

The non-compliance under Regulation 23 has been addressed.

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)

Four adults working in the service had a record of up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training.

(2)(a)

Suitably equipped first aid boxes were stored in each of the care rooms in the service in a readily identifiable location. The adults working in the service were familiar with the location of the first aid boxes.

(b)

The first aid boxes were available for use by the adults in the event of an emergency

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)

Records were available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were carried out by the service. The last fire drill took place on the 01 July 2025.

(b)

Up-to-date records of the number, type and maintenance service were available for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system. The most recent service of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system took place respectively on the 19 August 2024 and in November 2024.

(4)

Fire action notices were displayed demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

Up to date insurance cover was available for the childcare facility. The insurance policy for the childcare facility and community buildings is valid until 28 March 2026