

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE033
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Name of Service:	Crusheen Playgroup Ltd
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Address of Service:	Crusheen National School, Crusheen, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V95 DX29
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Name of Registered Provider:	John Oliver Mulkere
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	10/02/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	11	PM	8
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare.
Inspection undertaken by:	J Hayes
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	Not applicable
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Description of service

The service was established in 2000. It is operated by a community based limited company. The service operates from a purpose-built childcare facility on the grounds of Crusheen National School. It caters for up to a maximum of 22 pre-school children aged between 2 to 6 years attending on a sessional care basis. The service operates a morning and an afternoon session and is open Monday-Friday 09:00 - 12:00 hours and 12:15 – 15:15 hours.

Staffing

The registered provider is one of the company directors and the chairperson of the management committee for the service and does not work in the service.

The service manager operates the sessional service assisted by three childcare workers. The service manager was present on the 10 February 2026 when the unannounced inspection was carried out.

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 may also focus on other areas as required.

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

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels (1) (3)

Regulation 16– Record in relation to pre-school service (1)(a) to (k)

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

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.

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

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The service had a person in charge, and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

(b)

The person in charge and the deputy were available during the inspection.

(2)

Five files were available in respect of the registered provider and four adults working in the service. The findings included the following:

- (a)
Four references from past employers in respect of the adults working in the service were available.
- (b)
Ten references were available from sources other than past employers in respect of the registered provider and adults working in the service.
- (c)
Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the registered provider and four adults currently working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d)
International police vetting was not required in respect of four of the adults as they had not lived in another state for a period longer than six months.
- (4)
The adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications at Level 6 on the National Framework of Qualifications

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(d)
International police vetting was not available in respect of one adult who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months. A potential risk to children could occur where all vetting procedures are not carried out prior to allowing adults access to children in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The adult has applied for police clearance for the time she worked abroad. She is currently awaiting her application to be processed. Crusheen Playgroup has updated recruitment policy with regard to vetting to ensure a separate overseas police clearance for all staff/volunteers who have lived outside of Ireland for more than six months consecutively will be required.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence of application for the police vetting.

Summary Comment

(2)(d)

Evidence of an application for International Police Vetting for one adult was reviewed however; a copy of the completed International Police vetting 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 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.

(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 service ensured that the children attending the pre-school service were supervised at all times.

(3)

On the 10 February 2026 the minimum ratio of adults supervising the children was maintained at all times. Four adults worked directly with the eleven children in attendance in the morning and three adults worked directly with the eight children attending in the afternoon.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (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)(a) to (k)

All the required records in writing were available in the service.

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 of Children:

The adults treated the children in a kind and caring manner. The adults sat with the children at play activities and rotated in accordance with the children's cues for assistance. Children were encouraged to be independent during play-based activities, caring for their personal belongings, while having their lunches and drinks and while using the toilet. The children took great enjoyment and were fully engaged in all activities throughout the sessions. These included opportunities for imaginative play within the defined interest areas such as dress up, home corner, kitchen and construction. Physical activities that included dance and musical chairs. Tabletop activities such as peg boards, block building, colouring and literacy exercises. Mealtime was observed to be a sociable and an unhurried occasion and the children conversed amicably with each other and with the adults. Parents/Guardians provided the children's lunches which included sandwiches, fresh fruit and yoghurts.

Physical and Material Environment:

The programme of care and education was facilitated in one large, well-resourced playroom. The open plan care room was bright and spacious and was appropriately resourced for the age range and stage of development of the children. Designated areas of interest were available and included a home corner, a construction area, a sensory play area and a library area which was a quiet space with soft furnishings where children were observed to sit and relax and look at books.

Low level shelving throughout the playroom ensured children had access to play equipment and materials to support child led play activities which included small world, fine motor, creative and sensory play items.

An outdoor area was available to the children to the rear of the premises and provided opportunities for gross motor play such as climbing, running, ball games and ride on toys.

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)

Three adults working directly with the children held records of up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) training.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was stored in an accessible and conspicuous position in the care room.

(b)

The first aid box was available in the service 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)

A record of completed fire drills was available. A fire drill took place on 19 January 2026.

(b)

An up-to-date record of the number, type and maintenance service was available for the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarm system in the premises. The most recent service of the firefighting equipment took place on the 10 October 2025. The smoke alarm system was serviced on 28 February 2025.

(4)
Fire action notices demonstrating the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were displayed at the entry/exit points in the building.

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 twenty-two children to attend on a sessional basis. The insurance certificate will expire on 27 March 2026.