

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CN001
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Name of Service:	ABC Childcare
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Address of Service:	7 Cherry Grove, Drumgola Wood, Cavan, Co. Cavan
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Eircode:	H12 DE26
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Name of Registered Provider:	Carmel Sorohan
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Service type:	Full Day
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Date of Inspection:	24/02/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	28	PM	17
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Hampton Court, Cootehill Road, Drumalee, Co Cavan. H12 YY84
Inspection undertaken by:	S Mc Kenna & M Mc Donnell
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

ABC Childcare is located in a housing development within the town of Cavan. This service was established in 2010. The service is registered to provide full day, part- time, sessional childcare and education for a maximum of 57 children aged from 0 to 6 years and operates from 8.00am-6.00pm each weekday. There are three care rooms available, with only two in operation at inspection, named Toddler & Preschool room and Pre School room. An office, kitchen and sanitary facilities and a sleep room are also provided. An additional room on the first floor previously used for preschool children was used as storage and staff facilities.

Staffing

The registered provider and four staff members are employed in the service, which includes the cook. Three childcare staff and the cook were present upon the inspectors' arrival. The registered provider arrived onsite to the Toddler/Preschool room at 11am.

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 announced/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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation 22 Food and

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drink, Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, Regulation 24 Checking In and Out and Record of Attendance, Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures, Regulation 28 Insurance and Regulation 29 Premises.

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

An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on 24 February 2026 in relation to no Garda Vetting available for one staff member. An adequate response was received from the registered provider on 25 February 2025.

Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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 designated person in charge, who is the registered provider, and a named person to deputise in their absence.
- (b) Following discussion with the registered provider, it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation, the designated person in charge or the named person in charge was on the premises.
- (c) A management structure was in place, which was clearly identifiable through review of the staff roster and in discussion with the staff team.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, the information available upon this inspection

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and through discussion with the registered provider onsite, it was determined that 1 new staff member had been employed since the last inspection. The references on file for 4 staff were compliant upon the service's last inspection; therefore, were not reviewed upon this inspection.

(a) (b) Of the one new staff file reviewed, two written and validated references from a previous employer were on file.

(c) Garda vetting for 3 staff reviewed upon the last inspection met regulatory compliance; therefore, were not reviewed upon this inspection. The registered providers disclosure was identified as due for renewal and the Garda vetting renewal had been obtained and was available for review.

(d) Employment records of 4 staff employed were reviewed at the services' last inspection and regulatory compliance was achieved; therefore, were not reviewed upon this inspection.

A review of the employment history for the 1 newly employed staff member demonstrated that they had not lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months. Therefore, police vetting was not required.

(4) Documentary evidence reviewed at the last inspection for 3 childcare staff, and upon this inspection for 1 childcare staff, confirmed that the staff employed to work directly with children held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(c) One Garda vetting disclosure was unavailable for one adult. An immediate action notice was issued to the registered provider on 24 February 2026.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Garda Vetting for new staff member has been applied for and vetting disclosure has been received and forwarded to Tusla. Garda vetting disclosure will be available for all new staff before employment commences so that regulatory compliance is met.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of Garda vetting disclosure.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 9 (2) (c).

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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 was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspectors arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection.

- Upon arrival, one adult cared for 10 children aged 2 years 8 months to 4 years in the Toddler/ Preschool Room on a sessional basis. The cook was present in this care room, assisting with snack preparation tasks. Following sessional hours, two adults cared for 10 children aged 2 years 8 months to 4 years. In the afternoon, one adult cared for 6 children aged 2 years 8 months to 3 years 6 months.
- Upon arrival, two adults cared for 18 children aged 3 years 2 months to 5 years in the Preschool room, of whom 7 attended on a sessional basis and 11 attended on part-time or full day care basis.

(8) A review of the staff roster demonstrated that the registered provider ensured that 2 adults were present on the premises at all times.

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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
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

The following examples demonstrate how children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs

Children were observed to have a morning snack at 10.35am approx. The children were observed to enjoy their food in an unrushed manner, when finished eating the children were directed to get their drinking bottles from the fridge. The hot meal provided on the day of inspection was potatoes, mince, carrots, parsnips and gravy.

Evening snack was scheduled for 3.20pm approx. consisting of ham sandwiches for the Toddler /Preschool room and ham sandwiches and yogurt drinks for the Preschool room.

Spare clothing was available to the children. Toilet-trained children were observed to use the toilet independently throughout the inspection. Daily diaries were kept for the Toddler children and sent home at the end of each day. Soft sofas and seats and blankets provided cosy areas in the care rooms for children to rest and relax.

On the day of the inspection, both care rooms were observed to experience a change of environment to the outdoor area, where they played running and role play games.

Throughout the inspection, children were observed to be engaged in play or activities. In the Toddler/ Preschool room, children were observed to spend time playing with certain toys or interest areas. When tidied up they then moved on to another type of play. For example, children engaged in jigsaws play on a table top and the floor before dinner. After dinner, they could return to the jigsaws or engage in block play on the mat. When block play was finished, they transitioned to dress up and role play activities.

The children in the Preschool room had a range of play options readily available. During free play, children played with their peers and with a staff member in the home corner caring for the babies. Another staff member sat with children and read through books of their choice. There were separate sand and rice sensory trays set up with various toys, and children were observed playing in the sand area.

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Supporting Relationships

Children demonstrated confidence in their environment and familiarity with their daily routine. Positive interactions between staff and children were observed. For example, in the Preschool room some of the children were discussing the 'snake' they had found on the grass with the staff members.

The staff were observed to work well together. Transitions throughout play time, snack time and outdoor time were observed to be smooth and calm. Positive behaviour management was observed, for example during outdoor play the children in the Preschool room enjoyed playing on the ride on toys and trikes and staff members supported children in turn taking. Communication with parents is through in person at arrival and collection, daily diaries, email or by use of a digital messaging service.

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

Cereal is provided for breakfast up until 9am. The children who attend the preschool sessional care bring in their own food items for morning snack from home, which is stored in the fridges until snack time. Food items for snack time included yogurts, sandwiches, crackers and a selection of fruits. All children bring in their own drink bottles. The Toddler children are provided with a morning snack from the service which included a brioche roll and chopped orange apples and strawberries. The service provides a hot meal option to children in attendance on a part time or full day care basis. A copy of a 2-week rolling menu was available which detailed the hot meal served to the children which is cooked on site by the childcare cook. The hot meals listed on the menu, while taking into consideration the age of children, provided a suitable, nutritious and varied choice for children. Meals were adjusted to suit children's dietary requirements where required.

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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 main entrance door was secured upon the inspector's arrival. The entrance doors remained locked at all times during the inspection, ensuring no unauthorised person could enter the building or no child could leave the building unsupervised. A visitor log was maintained, and the inspectors were requested to sign in and out. Ground coverings indoors were maintained in a good state of repair, with a newly replaced floor in the preschool sanitary area upstairs and no trip hazards were observed. Stairways and handrails were maintained in good condition. Storage areas were inaccessible to the children. Cleaning products were stored safely out of the reach of children. Play equipment and resources were observed to be maintained in good condition. The outdoor area is surrounded by wooden fencing with secured gates to prevent a pre-school child from gaining unsupervised access to a roadway or other source of danger and to prevent unauthorised access to the garden or external play area. Risk assessments were available for review. Windows on the first floor had restriction devices in place. Blind cords were secured out of children's reach.

Infection Control:

Handwashing was observed to take place after the children used the toilet, and prior to snack and meal times. Thermostatically controlled warm water, hand soap, bins, and paper towels were available at each wash hand basin. The care rooms were well ventilated and maintained between the required temperatures of 18°C - 22°C. Care rooms and sanitary areas are ventilated through means of openable windows. Tables were cleaned before and after meals. External waste bins were stored securely and were inaccessible to children.

Administration of Medication:

Medication records reviewed detailed prior parental consent to administer the medication, the name of the medication given to the child, dosage, time administered, two staff signatures and a parent's signature upon collection of their child each day from the service.

Safe Sleep:

A sleep room with 6 cots was available for children's use. The registered provider advised that at present no child requires a sleep while in attendance.

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The cots were positioned at least 50cm apart. Individual bed linen was available and is laundered off site following use. Previous sleep records were available for review and detailed the child's name, position, colour and breathing pattern at 10-minute intervals.

Stackable beds, and suitable bed linen were available for children aged over 2 years of age.

Outing:

The registered provider advised the inspector that the service does not partake in any outings.

Non-Compliance Information

Administration of Medication:

Records reviewed outlined that a preschool child was recorded as having an allergy to certain food products. The staff verbally outlined to the inspector the child's allergy. However, no care plans were completed and signed by the child's parents to include signs, symptoms and procedures for what staff should do in the case of a reaction and or emergency.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Administration of Medication:

The child in question didn't have an allergy to certain food products but had a very mild intolerance to certain dairy products. At no stage was the child in any danger of suffering from any life-threatening reaction to these foods because the worst-case scenario would be that the child would vomit if these foods were consumed.

A recommendation by the inspector was that a care plan be in place.

After speaking to the child's mother about a care plan, she informed me that the child no longer has any intolerance to these foods and that she didn't mention it to us as the child doesn't have these foods in creche.

If any child has an Allergy/intolerance to any food product, I will ensure that there is a care plan in place.

In the case of a very mild intolerance to any food product, we will have on display a picture of the child and describe what will happen if they eat/come in to contact with these foods.

Supporting documentation submitted

Administration of Medication:

None submitted as no longer applicable following discussion with the child's mother.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider, outlining that the child's mother confirmed the child no longer has an intolerance, has adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 23.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that—

(a) no person other than—

(i) a pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider used written records which detailed each child's arrival and departure time on a daily basis.

(3) (a) The registered provider ensured that only preschool children, a person dropping off or collecting a preschool child, an employee or an unpaid worker can only enter the premises upon staff approval.

(b) A visitor log book is maintained, and inspectors were requested to sign in and out upon arrival and departure.

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.

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Compliance Information

- (1) (a) A record of the fire drills that take place was available. Monthly fire drills are carried out, with the most recent fire drill recorded in January 2026.
- (b) The annual maintenance certificate for the fire extinguishers was dated August 2025, and the smoke alarms were dated December 2025.
- (4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed on walls throughout the service, which contained details in relation to the procedure 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

The registered provider had insurance cover in place for 59 pre-school children attending the service on a full-day care basis. The policy showed that the service had insurance in place from 28 March 2025 to 27 March 2026.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and

Compliance Information

(d) The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic manner. Cleaning schedules were in place, up to date and completed by staff.

Non-Compliance Information

(d) A toilet seat was missing from one of the two toilets in the children's sanitary facilities on the first floor. This is a recurring non-compliance from the last inspection, where the registered provider's response detailed that "New Toilet seat is scheduled to be fitted 19/07/25. Toilet seats will be checked daily & replaced/repairs promptly". The corrective and preventive actions taken by the registered provider did not adequately address the non-compliance or prevent the non-compliance from recurring.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

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Corrective and Preventive Action

New toilet seat has been fitted. Toilet seats will be replaced if broken and a spare seat will be stored and fitted promptly if needed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of the new toilet seat fitted.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 29 (d).