

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015CN059 |
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| Name of Service: | The Village Preschool and SAC Ballydurrough |
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| Address of Service: | Ballydurrow Community Centre, Ryefield, Virginia, Co. Cavan |
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| Eircode: | A82 A306 |
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| Name of Registered Provider: | Celine Govern |
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| Service type: | Sessional |
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| Date of Inspection: | 11/09/2025 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|---|
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 28 | PM | 9 |
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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 |
| 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).

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| Conditions if applicable | Not Applicable |
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Description of service

The Village Preschool and SAC Ballydurrough (formerly Super Kids Preschool) was established as a community service in 2003 and acquired as a private service by the registered provider in August 2025.

The service operates within the local community centre in a rural area of Ballydurrough Co. Cavan. The service is registered to provide sessional care to children aged 2 to 6 years for 38 weeks per year. The service is registered to operate from 9:25 – 12:25 and caters for a maximum of 33 children. The service partakes in the ECCE scheme Monday to Friday between 9am and 12 midday.

There are 2 care rooms used by the preschool children named Small room and Big room, and a sensory room is available for use on the first floor. Sanitary accommodation, an office and a kitchen are also available. There is a large outdoor play area to the back and side of the service. Car parking is provided to the side of the premises.

Staffing

There are 9 staff including the registered provider employed to work in the service. The registered provider is office based, five staff work directly with the preschool children, two staff are employed to work with School Aged Children, and one staff member is employed as a bus driver for School Aged children.

A student on a work experience programme attends the service 3 days a week.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 Management & Recruitment, Regulation 11 Staffing Levels, Regulation 16 Record in relation to pre-school service, Regulation 19 Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation, Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, Regulation 25 First Aid, Regulation 26 Fire Safety Measures, and Regulation 28 Insurance.

However, on inspection an additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 8 Notification of change in circumstances. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 II - Registration and Register

Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) The service is registered with Tusla to operate a sessional only service between the hours of 9.25am to 12.25pm. Attendance records reviewed on the day and also confirmed by the person in charge, demonstrated that children attended the service between the hours of 8am to 6pm since 29 August 2025.
- The registered provider did not notify Tusla of the change in care type provided (Sessional to Full Day Care) or operating hours (9.25am – 12.25pm to 8.00am – 6.00pm) before commencing to provide care to children outside of their approved care type and operating hours with Tusla.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

A CIC application is in with TUSLA and the FFP inspection is scheduled for Wednesday 29th October.

Supporting documentation submitted

Application received.

Summary Comment

A change in circumstances application was submitted to Tusla on 12 September 2025. A fit for purpose inspection to increase care type to full day care, an increase in staff numbers and an increase in number of children was carried out on 29 October 2025. This change in circumstance has been approved; therefore, regulatory compliance has now been achieved.

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, and a named person to deputise in their absence.

(b) Following discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation the designated person in charge or the named person in charge were on the premises.

(c) A management structure was in place, which was identifiable through a staff display board and review of the staff roster.

(2) Documentation for the 9 staff and 1 student was reviewed, and the following was on file;

(a) (b)

A total of ten written and validated references from a previous employer were on file.

A total of two written and validated references from a reputable source were on file.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 9 staff and 1 student. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for all employed staff.

(d) A review of 5 employment records demonstrated that no adult had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 months as an adult, therefore police vetting for these 5 staff was not required.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that 4 staff employed to work with children, held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. A qualification for the bus driver, one student and one school aged only staff member was not required.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a) (b)

Following a review of the staff files available on site the following was determined;

- There were no references on file for 2 staff and 1 student.
- There was no second reference for 2 staff members.
- The validation process had not been carried out on one written reference for one staff member.

(d) A review of the available employment history records for 5 staff and 1 student, demonstrated that one adult had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months. The required police vetting for the one adult was not available in English.

(4)

- Following review of the available documentation it could not be determined that 3 adults employed to work directly with children held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) (a) (b)

All references are on file and verified for all educators.

(d)

Police vetting translated is on file for one educator.

(4)

One educator is not qualified, they work as a SAC educator, who is also doing their level 5 and does their work experience with us 3 mornings per week (not in ratio).

Two educators are qualified.

Supporting documentation submitted

Six written and validated references from past employers were submitted for 2 staff and 1 student.

A second written and validated reference for one staff member.

The registered provider advised that the second staff member has since left the service.

Translation of police vetting in English.

Copies of qualifications for 2 staff.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider, supporting documentation submitted and confirmation from the registered provider that one staff member has left the service has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 9 (2) (a) (b) (d) and (4).

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 following adult to child ratios were observed when the service was operating at maximum attendance: Three adults cared for 28 children aged 2 years 1 month to 4 years 7 months of whom 13 attended on a part time or full day care basis.

In addition to the above a staff member employed to work with school aged children was present.

Non-Compliance Information

(8) (a)

The registered provider did not ensure that 2 adults were on the premises at all times while operating outside of the registered sessional hours. Following a review of the staff roster, and through discussion with the person in charge it was determined that one adult cared for preschool children attending the service between 8am to 9am since 29th August 2025.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The roster has been adapted to ensure a second educator is always rostered.

Our policy has been changed to ensure a minimum of two educators are always rostered, regardless of the amount of children booked in.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of roster demonstrating a minimum of two staff rostered from opening o closing.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 11 (8) (a).

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;

Non-Compliance Information

(1) (a) Employment records for four staff were not available on file.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

CV's for all staff with employment records are on file.

Staff files are checked monthly for compliance purposes.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of 4 employment records was submitted, 3 of which did not require police vetting. The one staff member who required police vetting has since left the service.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider, supporting documentation and confirmation that one staff member has left the service have adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 16 (1) (a).

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

- The children were observed to enjoy their food in a relaxed and unrushed manner. The children were facilitated to take their time and engaged in conversations with their peers and staff during snack and meal times. The children had access to their drinking bottles at all times. Where dietary requirements/food plans for children were present the staff worked with the child's parents to provide for the child's individual needs. All food items are provided by the service unless otherwise requested by parents. A morning snack of crackers, ham, yogurt and fruit was served at 10.45am and a hot meal of mince, carrots and mash was served at 1.30pm.
- The children were observed to use the toilet independently with adults remaining close by to the sanitary area for supports if needed. Children that were not yet toilet trained had their nappies changed in line with their daily routine. Children's appearances were cared for through the promotion of children cleaning their runny noses, and staff were observed to use mirrors to help the children to achieve this task independently,
- Rest areas of soft mats, child sized sofas and cushion were provided in both care rooms for children to rest and relax during their day.
- The inspector was advised that outdoor play is the main ethos of the service, and the staff and children spend the majority of their time in the outdoors. On the day of inspection, the children were observed to spend most of their time outdoors except where snack time occurred when they went into the Small room, and when there was a very heavy downpour of rain they played between the Small room and Big room. The children while in the outdoor areas were dressed appropriately for the weather on the day of inspection.

Supporting Relationships

- The atmosphere upon the inspectors arrival was fun and welcoming, the children were playing in the outdoors and were observed to play on the climbing structures, digging in soil, playing on ride on toys and building towers with magnets.
- The staff used gentle word of encouragement for children to be mindful of other children’s feelings, where minor disagreements over toys occurred. The staff used age-appropriate strategies to help children find positive solutions to any problems they incurred.
- Communication with parents is in person upon arrival and collection, and through the use of a digital application. Conversations with parents/carers were observed at the 12midday collection time. Comments and photos were observed to be sent to parents using the digital application where new children were settling in.

Physical And Material Environment

- The indoor care rooms were laid out to include designated interest areas such as table top toys, floor play materials, construction areas, dress up and role play toys, dolls and prams, garages and houses, creative areas plus rest and book areas. Materials were freely available and accessible to children on low level shelves, nurturing independence to retrieve and self-care to return these items.
- The outdoor area is spacious and well laid out to accommodate the children’s needs. Developmental age-appropriate materials and equipment were available to include ride on toys, digging equipment, and building and magnetic toys. A partially covered concrete area where children played with ride on trucks, a grass area with wall mounted chalkboards plus mirrors, a digging pit and a mud kitchen was available. A soft ground surfaced play area to include climbing structures with slides, swings and balance beams was also available for children’s use.

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

The registered provider ensured all reasonable measures were put in place to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of children attending such as:

General Safety:

- The premises were appropriately secured to prevent a child from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. A door bell system to alert staff of parent/carer presence at the gates was in place.
- The garden area was surrounded with wooden and metal fencing and gates and concrete walls. Locked gates with padlocks fitted and codes only known to staff were in place.
- The toys and play equipment used by the children was observed to be maintained in good condition.
- Risk assessments were completed up to date and available for review.
- The kitchen area and storage areas remained inaccessible to the children.
- Blind cords were secured out of reach of children.
- Handrails and floor coverings were presented in good repair.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of children.
- Fire exits remained free from obstruction during the inspection.

Infection Control:

The inspector observed the following infection control measures in practice within the service:

- Thermostatically controlled running water to 36°C, liquid soap, paper towels and foot operated bins were provided for handwashing purposes. Hand washing was observed in practise following use of the sanitary areas, after messy play, following outdoor play and before snack and meal times.
- A nappy changing area with disposable aprons and gloves was provided for nappy changing purposes. A sealed pedal operated bin was used for the disposal of soiled nappies.
- Sanitary areas were ventilated through means of trickle vents, openable windows and mechanical ventilation.
- The children's snack or food items taken in from home were stored in the fridge in the care room until snack or meal times.
- Cleaning schedules were available for review, and the service was maintained in a clean and hygienic manner throughout.
- External waste bins were stored in an area not accessible to children.

Safe Sleep:

- Stackable beds and bedding were available for children aged over 2 years who required a sleep during their time in the service.
- Following the end of the ECCE session at 12 midday, an area was set up in the Small room for any children that required a sleep.

- Sleep records are maintained on a digital application detailing the sleeping child's position, skin colour, breathing pattern, times and staff signature.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. A lead from the fridge in the Big room was not adequately secured out of reach of children.
2. A gate leading from the outdoor grassed area to the carpark at the front of the premises had a gap between the hinged gate and the fixed fence section, which poses a potential risk of a child passing through and exiting the outdoor play area.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The fridge has been removed from the big room.

The gate was adjusted to decrease the size of the gap.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Photographic evidence demonstrating the removal of the fridge from the Big room and the works to the gate.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 23.

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) Following review of staff files and the weekly staff roster, the registered provider ensured that there was a member of staff trained in First Aid Response (FAR) on the premises on the day of inspection.

(2) (a) & (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available on the premises, stored in the kitchen and available at all times.

Non-Compliance Information

- (1) The registered provider did not ensure a staff member trained in FAR was available to the children at all times. Following review of the weekly staff roster, it was determined that during the hours of 5pm to 6pm each Tuesday no staff trained in FAR were rostered to be on site.
- Two staff (1 preschool staff, 1 school aged staff) hold in date FAR training certificates, and it is acknowledged a second preschool staff member is currently completing a FAR certificate.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

3 educators have FAR training. Certs are all on file
The Roster has been changed to include a FAR educator at all times is in school.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of updated roster.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 25 (1).

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 firefighting 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)(b) The annual maintenance of the smoke alarms was dated March 2025.

(4) The fire evacuation procedures were displayed on walls throughout the building which contained details in relation to the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire.

Non-Compliance Information

- (a) No record of template to record fire drills was available.
- (b) The annual maintenance certificate for the fire extinguishers was not available for review.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Fire drills are required once a month. The inspection took place on 11/09/2025 prior to the first drill. Fire drills have since been carried out in September and October 2025 as per regulations. The template for recording fire drills is on the digital App and was available on the day of the inspection. The Fire maintenance certificates were available on the day of the inspection, but they had been moved in error. Fire drills are carried out monthly in line with regulations and logged on the digital app. Maintenance records are now stored in an agreed place on the notice board in the reception area.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of completed fire drills for September and October.
Copy of fire extinguisher annual service record.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 26 (1) (a) (b).

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 up to 44 pre-school children attending the service on a Full Day Care basis. The policy showed that the service had insurance in place from 25 August 2025 to 27 March 2026.