

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DL028
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Convoy Community Playgroup Ltd
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Milltown, Convoy, Co. Donegal
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<b>Eircode:</b>	F93 CAE7
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Lorraine Ryan
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	11/09/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	32	PM	NA
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	K Folan
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Non-applicable
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### Description of service

Convoy community playgroup is a not-for profit sessional service located in Convoy, Co. Donegal. The service caters for children aged 2 to 6 years and operates two morning sessional services from 9:15-12:15, five days per week during the school year. The service operates from a purpose built single-story building which consists of two playrooms, a kitchen, an office and sanitary accommodation for both staff and children. A large outdoor play area extends around three sides of the building.

### Staffing

There was a total of 10 adults employed within the service. 9 of the adults worked directly with the children including the service manager who provided relief cover for staff breaks. Two of the adults were employed as part of an employment support programme and a further two adults were employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM). There was one adult employed to work on administrative/office duties. The registered provider does not work in the service.

### 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, safety, premises and facilities*. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,15,23,24,25 and 28. 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 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.
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (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)
- The registered provider ensured that:
- There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
  - The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.
  - There was 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.
- (2)
- On the day of inspection, 10 adults were present, nine adults who were employed to work directly with the children and one adult in a supernummary role in the office.
- 11 staff files were reviewed including that of the registered provider.
- 14 written references from a past employer for eight of the adults.
  - Four written references from a reputable source for four of the adults.
  - Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. 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.

(4) Eight of the adult files reviewed, evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

1. Four written references were not available in respect of three of the adults.
2. Five of the references that were available were not verified.

(2)(d)

3. International police vetting was not available for one adult who had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months.

(3)

4. The above procedures were not carried out before persons were appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. References were obtained.
2. References were verified.
3. International police vetting was obtained
4. A recruitment checklist has been implemented to ensure all vetting procedures are carried out prior to any adult engages employment.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

1. Documentary evidence submitted.
2. Documentary evidence submitted.
3. Photographic evidence submitted.
4. Documentary evidence submitted.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

### 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)

On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

(3)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times throughout the inspection.

On the morning of the inspection 8 adults cared for 32 children aged between 2 years and 8 months and 4 years and 6 months.

- In the caterpillar room 1, 4 adults cared for 13 children aged between 2 years 7 months and 3 years and 10 months.
- In the butterfly room, 4 adults cared for 19 children aged between 3 years and 7 months and 4 years and 5 months.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

*(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-*

- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child but only in respect of the record relating to that child,*
- (b) an employee who is authorised in that behalf by the registered provider, and*
- (c) an authorised person.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

On the day of inspection, a sample of 11 children's files were reviewed, a record in writing was held on file for the following:

- a) The name and date of birth of the child was available from 11 records.
- b) The date on which the child first attended the service was available from 11 records reviewed.
- c) The date on which the child ceased to attend the service was not applicable for the 11 records reviewed.
- d) The name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service was available from 11 records.

- e) Authorisation for the collection of the child was available for 10 records.
- f) Details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention was available from 9 records.
- g) The name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner was available from all 9 records.
- h) Record of immunisations, if any, received by the child was available from 10 records.
- i) Written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency was available for all 11 records.

(3) On the day of inspection, a record in writing in respect of each pre-school child was available and open to inspection on the premises by-

- (c) an authorised person.

### 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 was found to be secured on arrival preventing unauthorised access or exit from the premises.
- Materials and equipment were observed to be in a good state of repair.
- Warm running water was available for hand washing at a temperature below 43°C. in each of the sanitary areas and handwashing sinks in the preschool rooms
- Cleaning products and equipment were stored out of the reach of children.
- The outdoor area was secured with tall fencing and a bolted gate.

##### Infection Control:

- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to and after mealtimes in both preschool rooms.
- Foot operated pedal bins were available within the sanitary accommodation for safe disposal of waste.
- There was adequate handwashing facilities provided throughout the service with warm water, liquid soap.

and paper towels.

- Cleaning schedules were up to date and available to review.
- The sanitary facilities were observed to be maintained and clean with up to date cleaning charts available.

### Administration of Medication:

- On the day on the inspection no medicine was administered to any child. On discussion with staff in the preschool rooms, the inspector was informed of the correct procedures to be followed should a child require medication.
- Records of previously administered medication were available for review.

### Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.
- Fire extinguishers were on the premises and easily accessible.

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

- Garda vetting was available for 3 staff members. However, these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
- In the outdoor play area, a hose was stored at children level, posing a risk to the preschool children.
- A play kitchen in the outdoor area contained a build-up of algae and grime, posing a risk to children.
- A large accumulation of dust was present on the mechanical ventilation in the sanitary accommodation, reducing the effectiveness of the ventilation.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. Garda Vetting was obtained for 3 staff members. A system is now in place to track Garda Vetting renewal dates.
2. The hose was removed and placed in a locked container.
3. The play kitchen was cleaned and added to the cleaning schedule.
4. The mechanical ventilation was cleaned and added to the weekly cleaning checklist.

## Supporting documentation submitted

### General Safety:

1. Documentary evidence was submitted.
2. Photographic evidence submitted.
3. Photographic evidence submitted.
4. Photographic evidence submitted.

## Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

## 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) 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.*

*(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.*

### Compliance Information

(1) Records demonstrated that each child was checked in and out of the service by staff, on a daily basis.

(3)(a)(b) A visitors' book was provided in the main hallway of the service. Visitors to the service were required to sign in on arrival to the service.

(4) Records were retained for the required time period of one year.

## 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)

Seven adults were trained in First Aid Responder Training (FAR) Records demonstrated that at least one adult, trained in first aid, was available to the children at all times.

(2)(a)(b)

There was one suitably equipped first aid box available in the service. The first aid box was stored in an easily accessible position.

## 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 adequate insurance was in place for the preschool service for 44 children up to 27 March 2026.