

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015DL039		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Dunfanaghy Community Playhouse Ltd		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Faugher, Dunfanaghy, Co. Donegal		
<b>Eircode:</b>	F92 K1C8		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Sinead McColgan		
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	11/03/2026		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	10	PM NA
<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>	Not Applicable.
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### Description of service

Dunfanaghy Community Playhouse Ltd is an early years' service located in Dunfanaghy in Co Donegal. The service is registered to provide part time care to children aged 2-6 years and its registered hours of operation are 08:30 to 13.30 each weekday. On the day of inspection, all of the children who attended the service were present on a sessional basis between the hours of 09:30 and 12:30. The preschool operates from a single story detached building on an elevated site which is accessed from the main street. The building includes one playroom, an office, sanitary accommodation and storage facilities. Children have daily access to an enclosed outdoor play area located on the premises. A school aged service is provided in the afternoon.

### Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. There are five staff employed to work with the children. Three staff work in the service on a daily basis, with two staff providing cover in the event of staff absences. On the day of the inspection two staff were present 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/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities*. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,23,25 and 28; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29. 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)(a)

There was a named person in charge and a person available to deputise as required.

(1)(b)

The person in charge or deputy person in charge was rostered to be on the premises during the hours of operation.

(1)(c)

The person in charge confirmed that there was a clear line of authority within the service.

Six files were reviewed including the registered providers, and the following information was available:

(2)(a)

Nine written and validated references were available from past employers for four of the adults.

(2)(b)

Two written references were available from reputable sources for two of the adults.

(2)(c)

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)

Three adults had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement

## Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b)

One reference was not on file for one adult.

(2)(b)

One reference had no evidence of validation.

(2)(d)

There was no Police vetting on file for one adult whose employment record indicated they had lived outside of the state for a period of over 6 months while over 18 years of age.

(3)

The above procedures were not carried out before two adults were employed in the service.

(4)

There was no qualification on file for one adult.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Reference was obtained.
2. Reference has been validated.
3. References and vetting will be obtained in advance of staff member starting in the service.
4. Police vetting obtained from one jurisdiction; a second application is in progress for another jurisdiction.
5. Qualification has been located.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

1. Documentary evidence obtained.
2. Documentary evidence obtained.
3. Documentary evidence for one police vetting obtained.
4. No evidence submitted.
5. Documentary evidence submitted.

### Summary Comment

Evidence of an application for one staff for Police vetting was reviewed however, a copy of the complete vetting has not been submitted for one staff 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 (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.*

### Compliance Information

(1)  
On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

(2) On the day of the inspection the following ratios were observed:

- Two adults cared for 10 children aged between 2 years and 6 months to 4 years and 9 months.

### 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*

*(1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-*

*(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

(1)(a)(b)

#### Basic Need

- On the day of the inspection, all of the children attended for sessional hours only and were served a snack at 11:00
- The snack is provided by the service, with parents choosing their child's preferred option in advance. Choices on the day included, fruit, chicken sandwiches, ham and cheese sandwiches or jam sandwiches. Food is ordered from a local restaurant and delivered to the service.
- Alternatives were available for children with food intolerances.
- On the day of the inspection, the children accessed the outdoor area. Waterproof clothing and footwear were available to the children.

### Supporting relationships

- The service has a key worker system in place with each staff member assigned a group of children to form close relationships with.
- Staff informed the inspector that communication with parents takes place at drop off and pick up times. A software application is used to share pictures of the children’s daily activities with parents.
- Staff were observed speaking kindly to the children throughout the morning.
- There was evidence of teamwork among the staff team, with staff collaborating throughout the day in relation to the children’s needs and activities.
- Transitions in the service were managed sensitively for example, at tidy up time, the children were reminded that play time was coming to an end. A “tidy up” visual support was shown to the children, and a tidy up song was played while the children placed the materials back in the correct order.
- When minor disagreements over turn taking occurred between the children, staff intervened in a timely manner and provided strategies to support children’s regulation. For example, a visual timer was used to enhance the children’s understanding of sharing.

### Physical and Material environment

- The care room was warm and spacious, with ample room provided for the children to move around freely.
- Space was provided in the room for floor play, which allowed the children to build large train tracks and open-ended structures.
- The materials were easily accessible to the children in the room. Boxes were neatly arranged and labelled for the children to retrieve their preferred materials easily and enhance language development.
- A rest area was available, consisting of two child sized sofas should any child require them.
- The room contained materials to enhance all areas of a child’s development. For example, for fine motor development, puzzles, mark making materials and small plastic bricks were available to the children.
- For imaginative play, dress up clothing, open ended wooden blocks, magnetic tiles, small animal figures, a doll house and a home corner were available.
- For language development, a well-stocked library area with books suitable for preschool children was available.
- In the outdoor area, climbing apparatus, slides and ride on toys and footballs were available for gross motor development.
- Artwork recently completed by the children for the upcoming St. Patrick’s day celebration was displayed on the wall as well as fingerprint painting. Pictures of the children’s family were displayed on the walls.

- In the outdoor area, sand and water were available to the children. The children were observed to enjoy pouring water from jugs into colourful water pipes arranged on the fence. Chalk was provided to the children to draw on the outdoor blackboards with some of children drawing freely on the tarmacadam and the fencing.
- In the grass section, the children were enthusiastically racing each other with wheelbarrows.

### Non-Compliance Information

While fresh drinking water was provided to the children at snack time, there was no drinks available to the children outside of this time.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

A large plastic jug with a nozzle for children to pour their own water if they are thirsty has been placed in the playroom down low for easy access.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

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 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°Celsius in each of the sanitary areas.
- The outdoor areas were secured with fencing and a bolted gate.
- Radiators surfaces were covered in the service.
- The air temperatures in each care room were within the required range of 18-22° Celcius.
- Cleaning materials were safely stored out of children's reach.

##### Infection Control:

- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean.
- Staff were observed to remind children to wash their hands after using the toilet and before mealtimes.
- Cleaning schedules were up to date and available to review.
- The sanitary facilities were ventilated by open windows.

##### Administration of Medication:

- No medicine was administered on the day of inspection; however, staff advised the inspector of the procedure to be followed in the event of a child requiring medicine.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for one adult. However, this vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

**Infection Control:**

In the children’s sanitary accommodation, an open top bin was used for the disposal of waste. A pedal operated bin is required to prevent the risk of infection.

**Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

**Corrective & Preventive Action**

**General Safety:**

Garda Vetting has been applied for.

**Infection Control:**

Pedal operated bin was purchased.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

**General Safety:**

Photographic evidence submitted.

**Infection Control:**

Photographic evidence obtained.

**Summary Comment**

Evidence of an application for one staff for Garda vetting was reviewed however, a copy of the complete Garda vetting has not been submitted for one staff 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 23 remains outstanding.

**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)  
Records demonstrated that three adults were trained First Aid Responders (FAR) in the service and at least one adult was available to the children at all times during the day.
- (2)(a) The first aid box was stored safely in the kitchen which was easily accessed by the staff.

## Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(b)  
In the first aid box, all wound and eye dressings had expiry dates of 2023.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

New wound and eye dressing purchased. Regular checks on the contents of the first aid box will be carried out.

### Supporting documentation submitted

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 28 - Insurance

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

## Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance in place for 18 children to attend the service and was valid 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*

#### Non-Compliance Information

(d) In the children's sanitary accommodation, three taps were rusted and in need of replacement.

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

##### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

A plumber was contacted and the service is awaiting the work being carried out.

##### **Supporting documentation submitted**

No evidence submitted.

#### Summary Comment

The response submitted by the registered provider to the noncompliance has been accepted and this will be checked on the next inspection.