

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015GY017				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ballinasloe Community Childcare Group				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	M6 Business Park, Poolboy, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway				
<b>Eircode:</b>	H53 X9XO				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Joanne Costello Jordan				
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	19/12/2024				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>48</td> <td>PM</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </table>	AM	48	PM	N/A
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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>	L Costello and B Lavin				
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors				

### 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

This community operated pre-school is in an industrial development in Ballinasloe, Co. Galway. This service offers a full day care and part time care provision from 8.00hrs to 18.00hrs. The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programmes and sessional care programmes are also offered from 9.30hrs to 12.30hrs and 14.30hrs to 17.30hrs, Monday to Friday. The service is registered for pre-school children aged 1 to 6 years of age. There are four care rooms in operation in the service with two designated sleep rooms. The service has a kitchen a dining room where the children's meals are served and office space. A secure outdoor play area is available to the children this includes a sheltered area to allow for play outdoors in inclement weather.

### Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the premises. There is a designated person in charge and named person able to deputise. There are fourteen staff members working in the premises. Twelve adults working directly with the preschool children on the day and one adult employed as a chef.

### 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. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 10, 11, 16, 19, 23, 25, 27, 31 and 32. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16, 19, 23, 25 and 27. As a result, the scope of the inspection included the 'Baby Room' and the 'Toddler room'.

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

This inspection was prompted on a feedback and concern received to the inspectorate on the 9<sup>th</sup> of December 2024.

### Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish 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.

(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.

(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:

(a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;  
 (b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and  
 (c) these Regulations.

### Compliance Information

(1) (a) (b).

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

(2) (a) (b).

The records of three adults employed in the service since the last inspection on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 2024 were reviewed.

Six written and verified past employer references or references from a reputable source in the absence of a past employer, were available in respect of the three adults employed in the service.

(c)

A garda vetting disclosure was available for all 20 adults in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years the early

(d)

International police vetting was available for one of the newly employed adults that had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

One of the newly employed 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, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

## Non-Compliance Information

(7) (a) (b) (c)

The registered provider did not ensure that all employees are appropriately supervised and provided with the appropriate information and training.

- There was no record of the team meetings as set out on page 7 of the staff handbook, on interview staff members could not confirm when they last attended a team meeting.
- There was no evidence of 'one to one supervision' as set out in section 5.3 of the staff handbook, on interview staff members confirmed that no structured supervision takes place, however they can discuss issues with management at any time.
- A number of staff members had signed that they had read and understood the service policies, however there was no documentary evidence of newly employed staff members signing same which is in contradiction to information provided in the staff handbook.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

In a written response the registered provider stated:

### 7(a)(b) (c)

- Staff meetings have been scheduled to happen more regularly with writing documentation of the meeting being kept in the filing cabinet.
- One to One supervision meetings do take place, however, from now on the meetings will be documented to meet the regulations, and all parties will also sign off on the documentation to ensure that all parties are in agreement.
- The policies and procedures have since been discussed with the new staff member, and she has signed off on the policies and procedures. In the future, the manager or duty manager will check the policies and procedures and staff handbook regularly to ensure that all staff have signed off on them, ensuring all staff are aware of and understand them

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Policy sign of documentation submitted.

#### **Summary Comment**

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the person acting on behalf of the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to regulation 9.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### **Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service**

*A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.*

#### **Compliance Information**

The registered provider ensured that the following policies and procedures are in place for the service:

- (b) Complaints policy
- (j) accident and incident policy
- (r) Risk management policy
- (t) Staff training policy
- (u) Supervision policy.

### 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) There were 12 adults working directly with 48 children on the inspectors' unannounced arrival to the service. Two adults employed under a community employment scheme were also present in the care rooms.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:

- Baby Room: 1 adult cared for 3 children between 1 and 2 years of age.
- Toddler Room: 3 adults cared for 9 children aged between 1 and 3 years of age.
- Junior preschool: 5 adults cared for 16 children aged between 3 and 4 years of age.
- Preschool: 3 adults cared for 20 children aged between 3 and 5 years of age.

(8) (a)

The registered provider demonstrated that a minimum of two adults are on the premises at all times.

### 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:*

*(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*

*(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

*(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.*

## Compliance Information

(1)

(h) The registered provider demonstrated details of attendance by all preschool children in the service.

(k). The registered provider had records of accidents and incidents in the preschool service. These records demonstrated the immediate actions completed by the staff members and how the parent /guardian was informed of the incident.

(3)

The records were available for inspection on the day.

## Non-Compliance Information

(i)

The registered provider had a rolling roster in place where the staff members were aware of their weekly hours, however the service did not provide a record of this roster where the details of all staff in the service were recorded to include start and finish times and break cover.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

In a written response the registered provider stated:

(j) A formal roster has been done up, a copy has been put on the staff group chat for clarity and a hard copy has been placed in the canteen. The staff roster will be kept up to date with any new additions to staff and put back on display.

**Supporting documentation submitted**

Copy of roster submitted.

**Summary Comment**

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the person acting on behalf of the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to regulation 16.

**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**

(1) (a)

The Baby room is located on the ground floor of the service and equipped with a variety of resources to suit the age and stage of the children utilising the room. This room is used for children aged 1 to 2 years of age and therefore there is a focus on floor play with soft matting located in various areas in the room, to ensure comfort for those children crawling and learning to walk. A small play kitchen with various suitable resources stimulates imagination for the preschool child, a rest area with a library equipped with age-appropriate books allow for sound and language development. Musical toys and shakers allow for sensory development, while a range of arts and crafts facilitate creativity for the young child.

The toddler room also located on the ground floor of the building and catered for children aged from 1 years to 2 years old. Staff members were observed speaking to children during this time and using it as an opportunity for

warm one to one interaction. The individual sleep needs of younger children were met, and this was observed on the day by children sleeping at various intervals. Children in the toddler room were observed to be free to lie, roll, creep, crawl, pull themselves up and learn to walk in a safe space. The children played with a well-established home corner and toy kitchen. This encouraged imaginative role play. The room had a library and child sized couches which the children relaxed on and a wooden climbing frame and climb through tunnel for the development of gross motor skills.

(1) (b):

The adults supporting the preschool children were observed to be kind and respectful in their interactions. The younger children were held and comforted as required, children were observed to be comfortable in the presence of the adults as evidenced by laughter and seeking out staff members for cuddles. The staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. The inspector observed a child receiving comfort in the toddler room when they needed individual support. The staff member offered reassurance and communicated using soft gentle tones.

Mealtimes for those in the baby room and toddler room took place in the service canteen/dining room. Children were brought to this central area to have meals in the company of other children. Staff members ensured that all children were seated comfortably in highchairs or low-level appropriate chairs. The staff members sat alongside the children they were caring for, promoting independence in feeding and offering support as required. The service promoted healthy eating and food, and snacks were provided at regular intervals during the day by the service.

Nappy changing in the toddler and baby rooms were carried out regularly and promptly when required and handled in a positive and sensitive manner.

Sleep time in the baby room was individual led where staff members in consultation with parents responded to the individual sleep needs of the children. Standard cots were provided, and physical sleep checks were completed every ten minutes.

### 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 focus of this inspection was the 'Baby room' and the 'Toddler Room':

### General Safety:

- The main entrance into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, which prevented persons entering unauthorised and children from leaving the building unsupervised.
- All cleaning products in the care rooms were stored on high level shelving out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- There were three highchairs with harness safety straps fitted in good condition.
- Leads and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.

### Infection Control:

- Warm water, liquid soap and paper towels were provided for effective hand hygiene.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned after messy play.
- Materials and resources were observed to be clean in in good condition.

### Administration of Medication:

- No medication was administered on the day, however on interview staff members appeared to be aware of the procedures involved in administering of medication.

### Safe Sleep:

- Three standard cots equipped with waterproof mattress and cellular blankets were provided in the baby room.
- Three standard cots equipped with waterproof mattress and cellular blankets were provided in the toddler room.
- Two stackable floor beds were provided in the baby sleep room, staff members confirmed that these stackable floor beds are used for some of the toddlers (over 2s) who use the designated sleep room.
- Room temperature of the baby sleep room was recorded at 18.2°C on the day.

### Fire Safety:

- Emergency exit doors remained free from hazards on the day of inspection.
- An emergency evacuation cot with wheels was available in the baby sleep room for safe evacuation.

### Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

1. On the day of incident, a child had access to a toy that was not suitable for the child's age, and this was also set out in the manufacturer's instruction. It is acknowledged that on the day of inspection that toys only suitable for the children's age group were provided.

### Infection Control:

2. On the day of inspection had hygiene was not observed to be routinely completed on the following occasions:
  - In the baby and toddler room after nappy changes, the babies' hands were not routinely washed.
  - In the baby room and toddler room children's hands were not observed to be washed prior to snack and mealtimes.
  - In the toddler room the staff member did not wash their hands between changing eight children's nappies.
  - In the toddler room the staff member did not change their apron between eight nappy changes.
  - In the toddler room the changing mat was not cleaned between eight children's nappy changes.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. The toy which caused the incident has been removed from the premises and all toys are now age appropriate from the youngest child in the room. Staff audit the toys for age appropriateness' and conditions, removing anything deemed inappropriate or too damaged. Documentation of audits are displayed in each room. All toys will be age appropriate for the youngest child in the room at any given time. In the case of a temporarily mixed-aged room, staff will ensure that any toys that are not age appropriate for the younger children are not within their reach and the older children do not take them out to play.

##### Infection Control:

2. All staff been informed of this non-compliance and have been required to refresh their knowledge of the nappy changing and infection control policies. Management will regularly spot check the nappy changing routines of all the rooms, taking all consideration for the child's dignity. This will help to ensure staffs are adhering to the nappy changing and infection control policies and procedures. If consistent non-compliance is observed by management, disciplinary actions will be taken

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### **General Safety:**

No evidence submitted.

#### **Infection Control:**

No evidence submitted.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the person acting on behalf of the registered provider have adequately addressed the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to regulation 23 and this will be reviewed on next inspection.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of staff members supervising the preschool children. The preschool children played in their designated care rooms and for mealtimes moved to the communal dining room. Supervision of the children in the baby and toddler room was carried out by sight and remained consistent over mealtimes. The children had continuous supervision while in the care rooms with sufficient numbers of staff.

#### Non-Compliance Information

On the day of the incident while it is acknowledged there was adequate staff to supervise the number of children in their direct care. There was a lack of supervision in monitoring access to play items that were not for their age or stage of development and caused a medical issue for one child.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

Staff been made aware of the non-compliance and have advised all staff to ensure that children are supervised all times, and all toys are age appropriate for the youngest children in the room.

### Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted.

## Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the person acting on behalf of the registered provider have adequately addressed the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to regulation 27 and this will be reviewed on next inspection

## 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)

The registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid is immediately available to the preschool children attending the service.

There are two adults employed in the service trained in FAR with an expiry date of April 2026 and October 2026.

(1) (a) (b)

There is a first aid box located in each of the care rooms

## Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

### Regulation 31 - Notification of incidents

*A registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of any of the following incidents occurring in the preschool service:*

*(d) a serious injury to a pre-school child while attending the service that requires immediate medical treatment by a registered medical practitioner whether in a hospital or otherwise;*

### Non-Compliance Information

(d)  
The registered provider did not notify the agency within the required timeframe of an incident where there was serious injury to a preschool child while attending the service that required medical treatment in a hospital.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

In a written response the registered provider stated:

(d) Management are now aware that any hospitalisation resulting for an incident in the service requires that TUSLA be notified, this will be our procedure going forward. As the child was with us the day after the incident, before any medical treatment was received by the child, we did not think notifying TUSLA was required. Management are now aware that any hospitalisation resulting for an incident in the service requires that TUSLA be notified, this will be our procedure going forward

#### Supporting documentation submitted

No evidence submitted.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventative actions submitted by the person acting on behalf of the registered provider have adequately addressed the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to regulation 31.

## Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

### Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-*
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
  - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
  - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

(a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and  
(b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.

### Compliance Information

(1) (a) (b) (c)

The service complaints policy sets out the procedures to be followed when making a complaint, the manner in which the complaint will be dealt with and the procedures for keeping the complainant up to date.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2) (a) (b)

The service did not specify in their complaints procedure the definition of a complaint, therefore a concern raised by a parent of a child on the 27<sup>th</sup> of the November 2024 did not follow the complaints procedure set out in the service policy.

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

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

In a written response the registered provider stated:

(2) (a) (b)

The Complaints policy has been updated to define a complaint as a statement that something is unsatisfactory or unacceptable. Ballinasloe Community Childcare Group understands this definition to be applicable to any instance where a parent, staff or child makes their dissatisfaction with a situation known to a member of staff or the manager. The policies and procedures have been reissued to staff, and they have been advised to forward anything that meet the definition of a complaint to management to handle

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Complaints policy sent to inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection in relation to regulation 32.