

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY054		
Name of Service:	Caltra Community Playgroup Ltd		
Address of Service:	Caltra Playschool, Caltra, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway		
Eircode:	H53 E5C9		
Name of Registered Provider:	Avril Kane		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Dates of Inspection:	05/09/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	32	PM 6
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency. 2 nd Floor St Mary's HQ, Castlebar, Co Mayo. F23HP58		
Inspection undertaken by:	B Lavin		
Title:	Early Years Inspector		
Authority to Inspect			
The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).			
Conditions if applicable	Not applicable		

Description of service

This pre-school service operates from a purpose-built facility with 2 childcare rooms, the Senior room and Junior room, which are located on the ground floor. Quiet rest areas are available for children to rest and relax. The children had access under supervision to use the adjacent community playground. There are designated secure outdoor play areas located at the rear of the premises. The children also have access under supervision to a nearby pitch and an outdoor classroom. The pre-school caters for a maximum of 44 children at any one time, for children aged 2- 6 years, from Monday to Friday.

Staffing

There are 10 staff employed to work in the service. The registered employer is not involved in the day to day running of 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16.

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.*

(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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.
- (b) During the period of inspection, the person in charge was on the premises and facilitated the inspection.
- (2) Following a review of the service files and discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that there were 10 members of staff employed in the service.
- (a) There were 19 written and appropriately validated references available from their most recent employer.
- (b) There was 1 written and appropriately validated reference available from a source other than recent employer for 1 adult working in the service.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for all the staff working in the service. The service adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every 3 years.
- (d) Police Vetting disclosure was available for 1 adult working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over 6 months.
- (4) The 10 adults working directly with the children, had evidence of an award in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education or qualifications deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

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 were in place as per schedule 5 for the service. The policies, procedures and statements were consistent with the service practices.

- (a) Statement of purpose and function
- (b) Complaints policy
- (j) Accident and incident 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.*
- (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) There were 7 adults working directly with children on the day of inspection.
- The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of 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:
- Senior room: Two adults cared for 18 children aged 3 -4 years of age.
 - Junior room: Five adults cared for 14 children aged between 2 – 3 years of age.
- In the afternoon the junior room was closed. The senior room had 6 children between the ages of 2-4 years with 3 staff members caring for the children.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained.

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:

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

Compliance Information

(k) A sample of 15 accident, incident, injury reports were reviewed from each of the 2 playrooms; these were noted to have all the required information completed.

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

Compliance Information

Basic Needs

- Drinking water was available to all children in individual beakers throughout the day.
- Children were observed eating their snack provided by the parents/guardians which consisted of fruit, yogurt, cheese and sandwiches. Children were supported during mealtimes with opening food items when needed. Independence was encouraged with self-help skills.
- Children sat at tables and chairs which were appropriate for their height and/or stage of development.
- The staff were observed sitting at the child's level and chatted in a respectful manner.
- The privacy and dignity of each child was respected during toileting.
- Appropriate rest facilities were available in the care rooms and children were observed spending time in this area for short periods of rest throughout the day.
- Children had easy access to the outside areas throughout the day and children moved freely between indoors and outdoors. The children from the senior room enjoyed outdoor playtime in the adjacent public playground.

- The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours and supported children to find positive solutions to sharing toys, equipment and turn taking.
- Children had plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.

Supporting relationships

- The service supported the children in forming and sustaining positive relationships with staff.
- The staff were actively involved in children's play, where appropriate initiating games and joining in when invited to by children.
- The staff behaved in a way that created a positive atmosphere, having frequent social conversations, joint laughter and showing affection.
- The staff listened to the voice of the child as they communicated their needs, thoughts and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children's cues, gestures and body language.
- Soft tones were used with the children, along with the child's individual name, getting down to their level and making eye contact.
- The atmosphere in the learning environment was encouraging and unhurried.
- Staff guided and supported children who needed more help. Staff used positive strategies to support children's inclusion for example using personal greetings, news of the day, looking at family photographs, choice board, visual routines chart and giving appropriate encouragement.
- Staff communicated with parents and guardians by sharing knowledge and observations of the child's interests, strengths, developmental and care needs, approaches to learning, changes in their life and any other concerns at drop off and collection times, by phone and by text.
- The staff were observed helping children to find solutions, supporting them and talking to the children in a variety of ways- discussing, modelling and initiating games and activities.

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;

Compliance Information

d)
The registered provider did notify the regulator 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.

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.

(2) (a) (b)

A written record was kept of a complaint made to the provider in June 2025 and the complaint was dealt with in accordance with the service complaints policy.