

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015GY074
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Cortoon Community Childcare
-------------------------	-----------------------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Cortoon, Tuam, Co. Galway
----------------------------	---------------------------

<b>Eircode:</b>	H54 CP74
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Eamonn Donnelly
-------------------------------------	-----------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day
----------------------	----------

<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	12/02/2026
-------------------------------	------------

<b>Date 2 of Inspection:</b>	13/02/2026
------------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	44	PM	36
<b>Day 2</b>	AM	42	PM	38

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Clinical & Administration Building, Block A Merlin Park, Co. Galway.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S. Meehan.
<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
---------------------------------	----------------

### Description of service

This community early years' service is located on its own grounds adjacent to the community hall in a rural setting of Cortoon, in the outskirts of Tuam, Co Galway. The service offers the option of full day care and part time care provision from 08.00 to 18:15 and an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programme from 09.30 to 12.30, from Monday to Friday.

There are seven playrooms- on the ground floor is the Baby room, Wobbler room, School Age room, Arts/Crafts room and Portacabin 2. On the first floor is the ECCE room 1 and the Toddler room. The service has two designated sleep rooms - one adjacent to the Baby room with three cots and another opposite the Wobbler room where there are three cots for children. Additionally, stackable beds are available for children over 2 years of age requiring sleep. The pre-school children have access to secure outdoor play areas to the rear of the premises for play activities and exploration.

### Staffing

The registered provider was not on the premises on the days of inspection. There is a named person in charge and a named designated deputy. There is a total of 19 adults employed in the service which does not include the registered provider.

Fourteen adults hold at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 to level 6 on the National Qualifications Framework.

### 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.

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.

(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 registered provider ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a named person available to deputise.

(b) The staff roster indicated that both the designated person in charge and deputy was on the premises while the pre-school children were present.

(c) A management structure was available in the service and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

All 20 adult recruitment files were reviewed including the registered provider:

(2)(a) There were 35 of the required 40 written and validated references from previous employers.

(b) There were 5 of the required 40 written and validated references from source other than past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau were available for all 20 adults. The service

demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting every three years.

- (d) International police vetting was available for six adults working in the service who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months and these were available for inspection.
- (4) There was evidence that 14 adults who required a childcare qualification had attained at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 to 6 on the National Framework of qualifications or a qualification deemed to be equivalent.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(d) International police vetting was required and not available for one adult working in the service who had lived in another state for a period longer than six months.

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

The registered provider stated in their response:

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

We will ensure that all vetting procedures are followed prior to an adult working with children. At interview stage people will be asked if they have lived outside the jurisdiction and we will also check their curriculum vitae to check to see if they have lived outside the jurisdiction for more than 6 months.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Documented evidence of police vetting for one adult.

### Summary Comment

On review of the evidence submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate it has been deemed to have met the requirements of this part of the Regulations.

### 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) The registered provider ensured that there was adequate number of adults working with children.

(2) On day 1 of inspection, there were 16 adults which included the deputy manager, chef, kitchen assistant, cleaner, 3 school age adults and 9 adults working directly with children. On day 1 there were 10 adults working directly with 44 preschool children in the morning and 36 preschool in the afternoon.

On the day 2 of inspection, there were 13 adults which included the deputy manager, chef, cleaner, kitchen assistant, 2 school age adults and 7 adults working directly with children. On day 2 there were 8 adults working directly with 42 preschool children in the morning and 38 preschool in the afternoon.

### 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

19(1)(a)

##### BASIC NEEDS:

- Healthy eating was promoted within the service and the food observed was healthy and nutritious. The main hot meal of the day 1 was spaghetti bolognese and madeira cake for dessert. An alternative was offered as required. On day 2 the hot meal was meatballs, gravy, mash and potatoes. In the afternoon on day 1 there was pancakes and strawberries and day 2 homemade waffles and a selection of fruit.

- The children were afforded plenty of time to enjoy their snack in a relaxed and unhurried manner. Crockery, plates and water were given to children during the hot meal and snack times.
- The children had access to a water on a low-level table which allowed them the opportunity to take a drink if thirsty.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence.
- Hand washing was observed at appropriate times on both days- it was observed prior to snack time, after outdoor play and toileting.
- Each child's privacy and dignity were respected while they were either toileted independently or with some assistance as required.
- Nappy changing took place as required throughout the day and the correct nappy changing procedure was observed.
- The children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of child size couches in a designated rest and relaxation area in the playrooms. Stackable beds were available and were used on the day for rest and sleep for children over 2 years. There were two designated sleep rooms with six cots for children under 2 years of age. Children slept as required on both days of inspection.
- Adults were observed to know the children well and in turn made the children feel safe and secure.
- A key worker was assigned to each child to support and monitor their stages of development.
- Adults were observed to pick up on childrens cues for example sleep, nappy changing, support with activities and toileting.
- Children were observed at tabletop activities, sensory play for Valentines Day, making Valentine cards, playing in the clearly defined interest areas, arts/crafts, outdoor play and in circle time. The children appeared to enjoy outdoors riding tricycles, playing together and sensory play.

### 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 service provided evidence that a person trained in first aid for children was available to the children attending the pre-school service. Seven adults had an in-date certificate as a first aid responder.
- (2)(a) There was a first aid box in the playrooms and main office, with content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position.
- (b) The service demonstrated that the first aid boxes were fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

### 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 fire fighting 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)(a) A written record was available of the monthly fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was carried out on the 14<sup>th</sup> of January 2026.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the number, type and maintenance of fire-fighting equipment with the annual service date on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2026.
- The smoke and fire detection alarm system had the last annual service date on the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2026.
- (4) Notices were displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire on the premises.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service had in date insurance for 70 preschool children on a full day care basis which was valid to the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2026.