

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KK012
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Name of Service:	Carrigeen Community Playgroup
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Address of Service:	Carrigeen Church Hall, Carrigeen, Co. Kilkenny
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Eircode:	X91 KAK8
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Name of Registered Provider:	Nicola Walsh
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	01/05/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate. Ely hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford.
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry
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
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Description of service

This sessional service is located in the village of Carrigeen, in county Kilkenny. A service is provided to children aged from 2 to 6 years of age. The service is open from Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 12:00. The service operates from a converted parish hall adjacent to the church in the village of Carrigeen. The service consists of a large hall, toilets, and a kitchenette. The children also have access to an outdoor area to the rear of the service.

Staffing

There are four staff employed in the service including the registered provider who also works directly with the children. All staff held the minimum of level 5 and above in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ).

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 the following regulations:

Regulation 9 management and recruitment

Regulation 10 policies and procedures

Regulation 11 staffing levels

Regulation 19 health, welfare and development of child
 Regulation 23 safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child
 Regulation 25 first aid
 Regulation 26 Fire Safety

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 registered provider, 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*

(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)(b)

The registered provider was the designated person in charge on the day of inspection and remained in the service for the duration of the inspection.

Following a review of documentation and a discussion with the registered provider it was confirmed there were four staff employed in the service. All staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

All required written and validated references were available on file in the service.

(c)

There was a Garda vetting certificate available on file for all staff working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the requirement to have all staff Garda vetting renewed every 3 years.

(d)

There were police vetting certificates available on file for two staff who had lived in a state other than Ireland for longer than a period of six consecutive months.

(4)

All staff working directly with the children held a qualification at level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

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

There were written policies, procedures and statements, as specified in Schedule 5 available for the service. The policies reviewed for this inspection were the policy on managing accidents and incidents and the policy on the administration of medication in the service. These policies and procedures were complete and specific to the service.

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 was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the service throughout the duration of the inspection.

(3)
At 11:00 there were 19 children 2 to 6 years of age in the care of 4 staff.

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

(1)(a)

The registered provider ensured that each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service. Children were observed by the inspector engaging in a variety of activities during the inspection. The children were observed in the outdoor play area on the day of inspection. Staff laid out picnic blankets for the children to sit on. A staff member went to the local shop and bought ice pops for the children. The staff sat and chatted to the children while they enjoyed their ice pops.

The outdoor area was well resourced with a variety of toys and areas of interest to facilitate free play for the children in attendance. There was a concrete path for children to enjoy time on the ride on toys, a grassed area for children to run on, a large sand pit which could be covered to protect from cats etc. when not in use by the children, and a garage area which was used to store the children's wellies. This area had benches where children could sit and shelter if it was raining.

Children enjoyed freedom of movement throughout the outdoor area under the supervision of the staff who were present.

The preschool room was divided in two areas. A classroom area which consisted of tables, chairs and low shelving units which contained a supply of art materials paint, crayons and paper. The lower area consisted of a dress up area resourced with a supply of good quality dress up outfits. Original artwork was displayed consisting of the children's handprints captured in different colours. There was a large poster of the solar planets to further stimulate the children's interest in space and the planets.

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 external gate was secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to prevent unauthorised people gaining access to the service. The front door was secured by a lock. Access was gained to the service by ringing the bell. All cleaning agents were stored on shelves which were inaccessible to children.

Infection control:

The service had an infection control policy. Children were observed washing their hands after using the toilet and after messy play. The service was clean with no obvious maintenance required.

Administration of medication

The service had an administration of medication policy. The policy was reviewed by the inspector and was found to be in line with best practice for the safe administration of medication in a preschool setting. Previous records of medication that had been administered in the service were reviewed by the inspector. It was clearly documented; the consent was signed by the parents and the document of the administration procedure was verified and signed by two staff members.

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)
There was a person trained in a first aid responder course available to the children on the day of inspection. There was an adequate number of staff trained in a first aid responder course to cover the rota in the service.

(2)(a)(b)
There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position on the premises and was available to the children attending the early years 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 firefighting 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)
There was a record of fire drills that had taken place in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place in April 2025.
- (b)
There was a record of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment available in the service. This maintenance was carried out in March 2025. The annual service of the smoke alarm was carried out in service in December 2024.
- (4)
There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the main entrance of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was adequate insurance in place to cover the number of children the service was registered to accommodate.