

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY117
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Name of Service:	St. Oliver's Pre-school Ballycasheen CLG
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Address of Service:	Rookery Road, Ballycasheen, Killarney, Co Kerry
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Eircode:	V93 W594
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Name of Registered Provider:	Colm Ó Suilleabháin
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	09/06/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	11
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, 13 Market Square, Mallow, Co Cork, P51 DD5Y
Inspection undertaken by:	N O'Donoghue
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	N/A
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Description of service

St. Oliver's Preschool is in operation since 2020. The sessional service is registered to cater for children from the age of 2 to 6 years. Two sessions are run in this service, one from 8:30 to 11:30am and from 12:00 to 3:00pm. The service is located in a classroom within the grounds of a primary school in Killarney. The service has its own entrance hallway and the children's sanitary facilities are located adjacent to the care room. The staff have access to sanitary facilities down the hallway from the care room. The outdoor area is enclosed within the school grounds and there is access to forest area alongside the care room.

Staffing

There are four staff working directly with the children in the service. This includes the person in charge, deputy person in charge, childcare assistant and Access and Inclusion Model (AIM) worker. The registered provider does not work directly with the children.

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.

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, 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 service had a designated person in charge and a deputy person in charge on the premises on the day of inspection. In the event the person or deputy person in charge were not on the premises a named person able to deputise was available.
 - (b) A person in charge or named deputy person in charge were on the premises at all times during the operation of the service.
 - (c) There was a clearly identified management structure in the service. This included person in charge, deputy person in charge, childcare assistant and AIM worker.
- (2) Four staff work in the service; all four staff files were open to inspection.
- (a) Of the eight references required, seven validated references were from past employers.
 - (b) Of the eight references required, one validated reference was from a reputable source other than a past employer.
 - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all four staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
 - (d) Police vetting was deemed to be required for two of the adults working in the service and copies of the relevant documents were maintained on file.
- (4) All four staff held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education at least 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.

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 adults working directly with the children at all times.

(3) On the day of inspection, the adult to child ratios were in adherence to the requirements of the regulation.

- In the morning session, there was 3 staff working with 16 children aged between 3 years and 6 months and 5 years of age, all attending sessional care.
- In the afternoon session, there was 3 staff working with 14 children aged between 3 years and 5 years of age, all attending sessional care.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*

- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

(1) Children's enrolment forms were assessed for 10 of the children registered as attending the service. The records inspected had the detail required as listed from (a) to (i).

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) On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through:

- Direct observation and discussion with staff
- Examination of relevant documentation.

Basic Needs:

- The layout of the room allowed for children to move freely around and choose whichever activity or toys they wanted.
- Children had access to a variety of equipment and play materials which included acorns and logs.
- Children had access to their water bottles throughout the sessions. Staff brought their water bottles to the outdoor play area which allowed children to have a drink if they needed.
- There were table top activities available to the children which included puzzles, blocks and magnets. Children also had the option to choose their own game if they did not want to participate in the table top games.
- There were a variety of sensory activities available to the children on the day of inspection. These included sand play, nature play with acorns and leaves and balance suction boards.

- Staff were asking children if they wanted to participate in cleaning up, children were observed to freely get the dust pan and brush and support staff with clean up after free play.
- Children were encouraged in developing their independence skills such as putting on their own coat and zipping it up. Staff were available to support children if required.
- Staff encouraged children to express their emotions freely and supported them to express them in a safe manner.
- Children had access to a cosy corner or rest area which consisted and wooden couch. Children were observed to use this area throughout the session.
- Parents/guardians provided a mid-morning snack which consisted of sandwiches, fruit and yoghurts.
- Snack time was observed as a relaxed environment and staff sat with the children and spoke with them about their weekend activities.
- The person in charge provided additional snacks for children which included oranges.

Supporting Relationships:

- Staff spoke with children at their level, in a calm and relaxed tone. Staff encouraged positive reinforcement language.
- Children engaged in parallel play and were observed to check in on their friends and include them in play.
- Staff were observed meeting with parents at the end of the session, updating them on the activities of the day.
- During meal time staff sat at the table and engaged in social conversations with the children.
- A key-worker system was in place with named staff members assigned the responsibility for creating close relationships with a designated group of children.
- The service engages with the primary school supporting a smooth transition for children attending the school in September. The school also invites the service to attend activities and events taking place in the school, such as Well-Being week where the school held a puppet show and ice cream truck visited the school.

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:

- Access to the service is separate to the main entrance of the school which ensures there is no unauthorised access to the service.
- All emergency exit doors were clear from obstruction.
- All electrical cables were observed to be safely out of reach of children.
- Visibility strips were observed on low laying windows.

Infection Control:

- All foods were stored in the onsite refrigerator.
- Windows were open for natural air ventilation.
- Staff were observed cleaning tables between activities and prior to meal times.
- Water temperatures recorded in the room included 19.6° and 36°C.
- Regular handwashing was observed after outdoor play and before snack time.
- Foot operated bins were observed in the main room and sanitary facilities.

Administration of Medication:

- No administration of medication was observed on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clear of any obstruction and clearly identified in the room.
- Fire equipment was available in the room in the event they were needed.

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

It was evident throughout the day of inspection that children are supervised at all times, this was observed by staff engaging in supervision by sight and sound. Staff supported children when required. This was observed both indoors and outdoors.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

A copy of the insurance certificate for the service was furnished to the inspector. The information provided on the insurance certificate included:

- The contact details for the insurance provider.
- The name and address of the service insured.
- The number of children covered by the insurance was 22 children.
- The categories of insurance cover for the service.

The expiry date of the current insurance cover was 27/03/2026.