

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LH090				
Name of Service:	Stabannon & District Community Pre School				
Address of Service:	Stabannon Community Hall, Stabannon, Castlebellingham, Co. Louth				
Eircode:	A91 YX78				
Name of Registered Provider:	Anne Gormley				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	17/09/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>14</td> <td>PM</td> <td>-</td> </tr> </table>	AM	14	PM	-
AM	14	PM	-		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	No.18 The Grange Plantation Walk Monaghan				
Inspection undertaken by:	S Skinnader				
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

Stabannon and District Community Preschool is a community run service which is in operation since 2014. It provides a sessional service to children aged 2 years – 6 years. The service caters for a maximum of 22 children. The service partakes in the ECCE scheme and opens from 09.15 am – 12.15 pm Monday to Friday. This service is located in a rural setting of Stabannon Co. Louth. It operates from a community hall to the rear of the church. There is 1 care room, sanitary accommodation, and an outdoor play area to the back of the building.

Staffing

There are 4 staff members employed in the service who work directly with the preschool 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 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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. Both were on the premises when the inspector arrived and were present throughout the inspection.

(c) A clear management structure was in place in the service.

All 4 staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection:

(2)(a)

- There were 2 written and validated references available for 3 members of staff.
- One staff member had 1 written and validated reference.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 4 staff members. The service had adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for the 1 staff member who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction as an adult for a period of 6 months or more.

(4) All staff who worked directly with the preschool children had at least a minimum of a Level 5 childcare qualification.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) One staff member did not have a second written and validated reference.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The staff member obtained a new reference from her previous college. Once received, a phone call was conducted to verify and confirm the reference. In future, the registered provider will ensure that all references are obtained, reviewed, and confirmed in advance.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of written and validated reference.

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response was reviewed. The non-compliance was addressed.

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) On the day of inspection when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service there was 1 room in operation. During the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

(3) The adult:child ratios observed in the care room was correct, as there were 4 adults caring for 14 preschool children aged 2 years and 9 months to 4 years of age.

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:

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

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(i) A staff rota was not available in the service for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Following the inspection, a staff rota was developed and put in place to ensure staff availability is clearly documented. The rota is now displayed and kept on site daily to ensure compliance.”

To prevent this from occurring in the future, a current staff rota is completed in advance and kept on site at all times.

Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of staff rota

Summary Comment

The registered provider's response was reviewed and accepted. The non-compliance has been addressed.

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

There was 1 care room in operation on the day of the inspection.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

Basic Needs:

- All children had a change of environment to the outdoor area. Children were dressed appropriately to go outside and were assisted in removing their outdoor gear on return to the care room.
- All lunches were brought in by the children and stored appropriately in the fridge. Individual placemats were on the table for lunchtime. Lunches were observed to consist of sandwiches, wraps, fruit, chopped vegetables, crackers, yogurts and cheese. Assistance was given to the children who required help with opening lunches and certain foods, staff members also sat with the children during lunchtime. The children's drinks were readily accessible to them in the care room.
- Independence with toileting was promoted for the children who were toilet trained and discreet supervision was also provided by staff. Gentle handwashing reminders were also given to the children and hands were washed after toileting, after coming in from playing outdoors and before lunch.
- Tissues were available in the room and noses were observed to be cleaned when necessary.

Supporting Relationships

- The children were observed to be provided with sensitive care and nurturing interactions by the staff. Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the staff and children in the room. For example, “..that’s not like you are you ok? ”, “you are super at this”, “do you want to tell me what’s wrong?” The children were observed to seek out the adults for assistance.
- Communication with parents was predominantly informal at drop off and collection times.
- A key worker system was commencing, where each staff member would be responsible for recording individual and group observations on the children.
- There was a Day Book in the service to document information for staff including information given from parents.
- Transitions from outside to indoors and between activities were smooth plus support and comfort was given to any child who became upset when the lights were switched off. A child who was finding it difficult to settle on the day was comforted, carried and checked for illness.

Physical and Material Environment

- There were a good quantity and variety of age-appropriate toys and materials available in the care room. These supported many areas of development such as fine motor skills, role play and sensory development.
- Toys and equipment were positioned on open low-level shelving in the room which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children enabling them to choose which items they wished to play with.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(4) Where outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access is provided on the premises of a sessional pre-school service other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, a temporary pre-school service or a pre-school service in a drop-in centre, the registered provider shall ensure that such outdoor space is suitable, safe and secure.

Compliance Information

(1)(b) There was a soft comfortable area in the care room i.e. the “Calming Corner”. It consisted of mats and cushions with a canopy over it where a child could take a break and relax from activities if they wished. There were also some soft toys, books, a sensory basket, the family tree and worry plaque in this area.

(4) A well-resourced and developed outdoor area was available to the rear of the service. There were pathways for ride-on toys, grass areas with sand and water trays, a tunnel, tyres, a gravel pit and a mud kitchen under some trees, water shoots, picnic bench, fruit trees and a sensory garden. In addition, there was a covered outside classroom area with some tables and chairs, art supplies and toys.

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 there was a person trained in First Aid Response (FAR) for children, on the premises at all times. One FAR certificate was reviewed.

(2)(a) and (b) An adequately stocked first aid box was available to the preschool children.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The registered provider had adequate insurance cover for a maximum of 22 children on a sessional basis expiring the 27/03/26.