

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015LK093		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Kilfinane Playschool CLG		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Low Bridge Road, Kilfinane, Co. Limerick		
<b>Eircode:</b>	V35 DX54		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Marie O'Leary		
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	11/09/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	37	PM 6
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate, Estuary House, Henry St, Limerick		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	E Browne		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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 based preschool provides a sessional and part time service for children aged between 2 to 6 years of age from 08.45 to 13.30hrs for 38 weeks of the year. This service operates from a purpose-built facility, located in the village of Kilfinane, Co. Limerick.

The service has 2 designated pre-school rooms, bathroom facilities for the adults and children, an open office, a kitchen /storage room and reception area.

There are enclosed outdoor play areas to the rear and front of the premises. It can cater for 44 preschool children at any one time. The service offers a school aged service to children from the local National schools.

### Staffing

The service currently employs 7 staff members including the person in charge/service manager. There were 7 staff working directly with the children on the day of inspection including the manager. All staff hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education on the National Qualifications Framework. The registered provider does not work in the service and was not present on the day.

### 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) On the day of the inspection the registered provider had ensured there was a designated person in charge of operating the service and there was a named person available who was able to deputise as required.

(b) During the period of the inspection the person in charge and the deputy were available at all times. The staff roster indicated that the person in charge and the deputy manager were always accessible on site.

(c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identified the specific roles and responsibilities of each staff member. Team Leaders were appointed in each of the two playrooms.

(2) The files of the 7 staff members were viewed on the day.

Two written and validated references from past employers and other sources were available for all staff.

(a) There were 8 validated references from past employers available on file.

(b) Where past employer references were not available, there were 6 validated references from sources other than past employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures received from the National Vetting Bureau of An Garda Síochána were available for all staff employed at the service. 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) Police vetting was not required for any staff member employed in the service as no staff member had lived outside of the jurisdiction for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4) All adults working directly with children held an appropriate qualification in early childhood care and education.

### 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 service ensured that there were written policies and procedures available to the staff members working in the service and to all the parents/ guardians of the pre-school children attending the service. These policies were last reviewed and updated by management and staff in June of 2025.

### 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) On the day of the inspection there were 3 staff working directly with 18 preschool children present in the Little Acorns playroom and 4 staff with 19 children present in the Busy Buds playroom for the morning sessional ECCE service.

There were 4 staff available to supervise and care for the 6 children who remained in the service until 13.30hrs.

(2) At all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider ensured that an adequate number of staff members were working directly with the children.

### 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) BASIC NEEDS:

The services objective was to ensure that each child's learning, development and well-being was supported, taking all children's individual interests, needs and stage of development into consideration. There was a healthy eating policy in place in the service to encourage and educate the children about the importance of good nutrition. The parents supplied healthy snacks and drinks for the pre-school children. Perishable foods were stored in a refrigerator until required each day. Staff sat with the children at break times and actively encouraged mealtimes to be a social occasion. Children's drinks were stored out of their bags and were easily accessible to them throughout the day. A hot meal was provided for the children who remained in the service until 13:30 hrs. Children had unrestricted access to the toilets which were located next to the playrooms. Foot pedal operated, lidded bins were used for the safe disposal of used tissues and handtowels. A nappy changing facility was accessible if required. Staff were available to assist children at all times if needed.

Lots of soft seating and rest areas were evident in the rooms for children to relax and rest if time away from active play was needed. The sensory room was used as a breakout room for individual or small group activities. The facility had well-resourced outdoor play areas where children had an opportunity to play in all weather conditions. Protective clothing was available for messy play, and the availability of rain gear ensured outdoor play regardless of weather.

The outdoor area provided opportunities for fresh air, discovery, movement, exploration and activities exclusive to the outdoors. A planting area was provided, a space for jumping, running, climbing, ball games, balancing were also accessible. The children were observed playing and exploring in the outdoor areas having many moments of fun and laughter. The staff were observed to be actively involved in children's play where they initiated play and joined in the games when invited by the children.

### 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 were 3 staff members working in the service who has current first aid responder certification with an expiry date in December 2026.

(2)(a) The first aid box was readily identifiable and accessible to the staff working in the service.

(b) The fully equipped first aid box was stored safely in the service and available to the children.

### 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) A record was available with the monthly fire drills documented from January to June 2025. The fire drill for the preschool new year were due to commence week beginning 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2025.

(b) The maintenance record for the firefighting equipment dated March 2025 and the fire alarm system dated the 8<sup>th</sup> of September were on file.

(4) A fire assembly point was identified at the front of the preschool premises. The notice of procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the main entrance area of the service.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

#### Compliance Information

- (a) The preschool building appeared to be well maintained with no observable indications of defects.
- (b) The entrance and emergency doors to the service were secure and a keypad entry system was in place at the main entrance. All persons entering and leaving the building must be escorted by a staff member. The physical environment was safe and secure for purpose of a preschool service.
- (c) The playrooms were inviting bright environments with sufficient windows that provides enough light and comfort for activities. The service ensured the playroom and sanitary accommodation were maintained within the following temperature limits of 18 to 22 degrees Celsius There was a balance between natural and artificial lighting. Openable windows were provided in the playrooms and in the sanitary accommodation as a means of air circulation.
- (d) The premises were in a clean condition, well maintained and repairs attended to without delay. Cleaning schedules were in line with the cleaning programmes in place at the service.
- (e) The facility has 5 single toilets cubicles and five corresponding wash hand basins available for the 44 preschool children attending the service. Additional wash hand basins were available in each playroom.
- Nappy changing facilities were provided with an updated nappy changing policy in line with the Management of Infectious Diseases for Childcare Facilities and Other Childcare Settings. Pedal operated bins were available for disposing of general waste and a sealed, lidded, and pedal operated bin for nappy disposal.
- Hand washing and drying facilities were adequate and suitable. The hot water was thermostatically controlled at the recommended temperature of no more than 43°C. There was a supply of liquid soap and a paper towel dispenser/and dryer available to facilitate effective handwashing and drying.
- Separate adult toilet facilities were available for the staff members working in the service.