

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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| TUSLA Identifier: | TU2015LM009 | | |
| Name of Service: | Cloone/Aughavas Comm Childcare Ltd (Little Rascals) | | |
| Address of Service: | Cloone Community Centre, Cloone, Co. Leitrim | | |
| Eircode: | N41 X0K2 | | |
| Name of Registered Provider: | Declan McNamara | | |
| Service type: | Sessional | | |
| Date of Inspection: | 27/02/2026 | | |
| No of pre-school children: | AM | 8 | PM NA |
| Address of the Early Years Inspectorate: | Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84 | | |
| Inspection undertaken by: | K Folan | | |
| 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. | | |

Description of service

Cloone/Aughavas Community Childcare Ltd is a community-based early years' service located in Cloone, Co. Leitrim. The service is registered to provide sessional care to children aged 3 to 6 years of age from 09:00 to 12:15 from Monday to Friday. The service is located in a community building and comprises of one care room, a storage room, a large sports hall and sanitary accommodation for children and adults. A fully enclosed outdoor area is available to the back of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. There are four adults employed to work in the service. Of the four adults, two adults work with the children on a daily basis and a further two adults are available to provide cover in the event of staff absences. On the day of the inspection, two adults were present in the service.

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 regulations 9,11,16,19,23,25, 26 and 28.

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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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)

There was a named person in charge and a person available to deputise as required.

(1)(b)

The person in charge or deputy person in charge were rostered to be on the premises during the hours of operation.

(1)(c)

The person in charge confirmed that there was a clear line of authority within the service.

Five staff files were reviewed including the registered providers, and the following information was available:

(2)(a) Six written and validated references were available from past employers for four of the adults.

(2)(b) Two written and validated reference was available from reputable sources for two of the adults.

(2)(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for five adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(4) Four adults had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

Non-Compliance Information

- (2)(a)(b) There were no references on file in respect of one adult.
- (2)(d) It could not be determined if police vetting was required for one adult due to the absence of an employment record.
- (3) The above procedures were not carried out before an adult had commenced working with the children in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- Two references were obtained, verified and submitted. In future, references will be obtained for each employee, unpaid worker and contractor before they begin to work in the service.
- An employment record has been obtained.
- The specified requirements and recruitment procedures shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the preschool service.

Supporting documentation submitted

- Documentary evidence submitted.
- Documentary evidence submitted.
- Documentary evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

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

On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

- (3)
- On the morning of the inspection two adults cared for eight children aged between 3 years and 7 months and 5 years.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*
- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a-f)
- The details of staff qualifications and experience, ratios, type of care provided, opening hours and facilities provided were displayed on the service notice board.
- (g)
- The services policy folder contained the required policies required in Regulation 10.
- (h)
- A record of each child's daily attendance was recorded in attendance books in each room.
- (i)
- A record of the staff roster was displayed on the wall in the service.
- (k)
- Four accident and incident forms were reviewed. All forms contained the child's name and date of birth, details of the incident and were signed by staff and parents.
- (3)
- These records were made available to the authorised person on the day.

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*
- (1) A registered provider shall, in providing a pre-school service, ensure that-*
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

Basic need

- The service has a healthy eating policy in place. Children bring their own food from home which is stored in a refrigerator.
- Snack time was relaxed and children had enough time to eat their food.
- After snack time, staff ensured the children's faces and hands were cleaned, giving assistance to children who required it.
- Staff supported children in their respiratory hygiene.
- Drinks which the children bring from home are available to them throughout the sessions.
- The service has a key worker system in place with each staff member assigned responsibility for a group of children.
- Children were supported to use the toilet independently with assistance given to those who required it.

Supporting relationships

- Staff were observed speaking kindly to the children throughout the session and demonstrated care and empathy towards the children, for example a child became upset staff reassured the child and provided comfort.
- Staff communicated with each other throughout the morning and afternoon sessions in relation to the children's needs and activities.
- Staff advised that communication with parents takes place verbally at pick up and drop off times. A software application is used to send parents pictures and updates in relation to the children's activities during the week. Outside the door of the service, a parent's noticeboard is available for displaying general information about the service.
- The children appeared happy and at ease with the routine of the day. Each child engaged in activities in small groups or at times, independently. In the large hall, the children engaged in different sports games, with turn taking encouraged and modelled by the staff.

Physical and material environment

- The preschool room was spacious with enough room for the children to engage in floor play with various materials such as train tracks, vehicles and building blocks, a farmyard set and a doll house.
- Open ended materials such as magnetic shapes and plastic bricks were neatly stored in storage boxes and accessible to the children.
- Sensory play materials for example sand, water and play dough were available to the children throughout the morning.
- A home corner and dress up clothing were available to develop children's imagination.
- The preschool was decorated with educational posters about road safety, days of the week and the alphabet as well as artwork the children has recently completed.
- Small couches were available should any child require a rest.
- Extra materials and resources were stored in a separate room attached to the main preschool room and staff advised that toys and resources are regularly rotated to promote children's engagement and enjoyment in the environment.
- The service has use of a large hall equipped with footballs, tennis rackets and goalposts which the children accessed on the day of inspection

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 main entrance was found to be secured on arrival preventing unauthorised access or exit from the premises.
- Materials and equipment were observed to be in a good state of repair.
- Warm running water was available for hand washing at a temperature below 43°Celsius in each of the sanitary areas.

- The outdoor areas were secured with tall fencing and a restricted entry gate.
- Radiator surface temperatures were below 50° Celcius.
- The air temperatures in each care room were within the required range of 18-22° Celcius.
- Cleaning materials were safely stored out of children's reach.

Infection Control:

- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to and after snacktime.
- There was adequate handwashing facilities provided throughout the service with warm water, liquid soap, and paper towels.
- Cleaning schedules were up to date and available to review.
- The sanitary facilities were observed to be maintained and clean with up to date cleaning charts available.

Administration of Medication:

- No medicine was administered on the day of inspection; however, staff were aware of the correct procedure to be followed in the event of a child requiring medicine.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

A swing top bin was present in the sanitary accommodation for the disposal of waste. Food pedal operated bins are required to prevent cross infection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

A pedal operated bin had been purchased, and the swing top bin has been removed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection Control:

Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The corrective and preventive actions submitted by the registered provider adequately address the non-compliance found on inspection. This regulation is now compliant.

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) Two adults were trained First Aid Responders (FAR) in the service and at least one adult was available to the children at all times during the day.

(2)(a)(b) There was a suitably equipped first aid box available in the service. The first aid box was stored in an easily accessible position.

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.

(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-

(a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,

(b) an employee, and

(c) an authorised person.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation

(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 of fire drills was kept by the service with the most recent drill carried out on 09 February 2026.
- (b) Records were available to evidence that the firefighting equipment was last serviced in April 2025 and smoke alarms were serviced on 09 February 2026.

(2)(c)

The registered provider ensured the records were available for inspection.

(4)

Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had adequate insurance in place for 22 children up to 27 March 2026.