

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LM020				
Name of Service:	Carrigallen Childcare Facility CLG				
Address of Service:	Chapel Road, Carrigallen, Co. Leitrim				
Eircode:	H12 YW01				
Name of Registered Provider:	Dominic Taafe				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	24/02/2026				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>36</td> <td>PM</td> <td>28</td> </tr> </table>	AM	36	PM	28
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84				
Inspection undertaken by:	L Costello				
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

Carrigallen Childcare Facility Ltd is a community run early years service. It is located on the outskirts of Carrigallen town. The service is registered to cater for a maximum of 53 children aged 0 to 6 years. The service opens 51 weeks per year. The service operates from a converted national school building. The ground floor consists of one baby room, a creche room, one preschool room, two nappy changing areas, sanitary accommodation, two sleep rooms, an office and a kitchen. A preschool room is on the first floor of the premises along with sanitary accommodation. Two outdoor areas are situated to the back and one to the front of the premises. On the day of inspection there was four care rooms in operation.

Staffing

Twelve staff are employed in the service. On the day seven staff members work directly with the preschool children. One staff member worked in the kitchen and covered breaks as required. Three staff members were on various leave. The person in charge is supernumerary and covers breaks as required. All adults working directly with the preschool children hold a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education. The registered provider is a board member and does not work directly with the preschool children. Three students under 16 were completing work experience 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/ 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, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26 and 27. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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

(b)

The person in charge was on the premises when the inspector arrived and remained on the premises throughout the period of the inspection. A review of the staff roster indicated that the person in charge or named deputies were rostered to be on the premises during the hours of operation.

(c)

The person in charge confirmed that there was a clear line of authority within the service. Staff can report to their room leader or, directly to the person in charge. When discussed with the inspectors, staff demonstrated clear understanding of their role within the service and the reporting structure as described by the registered provider.

(2) (a)(b)

The service has twelve adults employed in the service and all employee records were reviewed. Twenty-one written and verified past employer references and three written and verified references from an other source in the absence of a past employer were available for all twelve adults.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for twelve staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

International police vetting was available for the one adult who had resided outside the state for a period of six months or more as an adult.

(3)

The required vetting procedures had been carried out prior to an adult having access to a preschool child.

(4)

Twelve 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.

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) There were seven adults working directly with 36 children on the inspectors' unannounced arrival to the service. A review of a sample of attendance records showed that an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children during service hours of operation.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of the unannounced inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:

- Creche Room: 2 adults cared for 10 children aged from 2 years to 3 years of age.
- Baby Room: 1 adult cared for 3 children aged from 10 months to 15 months of age.
- Rainbow preschool: 3 adults cared for 16 children aged from 3 years to years of age.
- Unicorns care room: One adult cared for 6 children aged from 3 years to 5 years of age.

At approximately 13.30 in the afternoon the following ratios were observed:

- Creche Room: 2 adults cared for 10 children aged from 2 years to 3 years of age.
- Baby Room: 1 adult cared for 3 children aged from 10 months to 15 months of age.
- Rainbow preschool: 3 adults cared for 15 children aged from 3 years to years of age.
- Unicorns care room: closed

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.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) all documents and records relating to references and Garda and police vetting obtained under Regulation 9(2) are retained for a period of 5 years from the date on which the person to whom the document or record relates commences working in the service, and

(b) a record referred to in subparagraph (h), (j) or (k) of paragraph (1) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child to whom it relates ceases to attend the service, or in the case of a preschool service in a drop-in centre or of a temporary pre-school service, for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends 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.

(4) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises by a parent or guardian of a child but only in respect of information concerning that child.

Compliance Information

(1)

The service demonstrated accurate records were kept as follows:

(a) Employment records contained the necessary vetting procedures, qualifications and employment history of adults in the service.

(b) Details of the type of service and provisions were clearly displayed on information board.

(c) Records of child to adult ratios were maintained in attendance books.

(d) The programme of care was displayed on the care room walls.

(e) –(f) The facilities available and opening hours were clearly displayed on the service notice board.

(g) The service policies were available for parents and staff members in hard and soft copy.

(h) All children's attendance was recorded daily in each room.

(i) The staff attendance was recorded daily and amendments to the predicted roster were recorded.

(j) A sample review of twelve medication administration records included consent, the type of medication administered, the reason for administration and outcome.

(k) A sample review of 18 accident and incident records included any follow up action taken by the service and demonstrated that parents or guardians had been informed.

(2) (a)

The service demonstrated that all records in relation to Regulation (9)(2) are retained for a five years.

(2) (b)

The service demonstrated that records in relation to children's daily attendance, medication administration and accidents and incidents are retained for a minimum of two years for their creation.

(3)

All required documents and records were made available to the inspector on the day.

(4)

The service demonstrated that all accident and incident records were made available to the parent or guardian of the child who the record relates to as evidenced by the parent signature.

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-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(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.

Compliance Information

(1) (a)

The service operates out of four care rooms. Each of the four care rooms has suitable play facilities for the age and stage of the child attending the room.

Baby Room:

The baby room is a room decorated with colour and texture to catch the eye of the young child. The floor space includes areas of soft padding to support and create a safe place for young babies to crawl, roll and

learn to walk. The ceiling is decorated with eye catching colours and ceiling decorations to stimulate the child as they are lying on their back. Mirror walls, sensory boards and pull up bars provide opportunities for exploration. Baskets of musical toys, soft toys and age-appropriate puzzles and blocks provide opportunities for various forms of play. The room is equipped with highchairs and appropriate safety harness for mealtimes. An adult size chair with arm rests provides comfort to the adults holding and feeding young children.

Creche Room:

The creche room supports children aged from 2 to 3 years of age This room is equipped with a variety of age-appropriate toys and resources stored on low level accessible shelving to enable child led play. The room is a large bright room with high ceilings. The doors, radiator covers and shelving units are painted in a variety of colours including green, purple and blue which adds interest to the care room. Child size height appropriate table and chairs provide an appropriate space for tabletop activities and mealtimes. A home corner with a size appropriate kitchen and dress up area allows for role play. Baskets of building blocks, cars and tractors, promote opportunities for imaginary play. Sand and water trays provide opportunities to support sensory play. A library stocked with an array of books promote language development for the young preschool child.

Rainbow Room:

The rainbow room is a large room set up with various interest areas to stimulate the imagination of the preschool child. The room is designed to allow for free movement throughout and children were observed moving from area to another directing their own sense of play. Accessible shelving stocked with an array of resources including puzzles, jigsaws, magnets, threading toys, musical instruments, small world toys, farm animals, cars, building blocks and arts and crafts provide opportunities for fine motor skill development, imaginary play and creativity. Sand boxes resourced with pasta and sand provide opportunities for sensory play. The Rainbow room has a sufficient amount of size appropriate tables and chairs to ensure children are comfortable throughout the day and have a space for tabletop activities and mealtimes.

Unicorns Room:

The unicorn room is located on the first floor of the building. A staircase that is appropriately lit with a safety banister at the child's height allows for safe entry and egress. This room caters for the older preschool child and is set up with age-appropriate toys and resources set up in various interest areas. Home corners are equipped with kitchens with resources, dolls and cots, dress up areas. Construction

areas include building blocks, tractors, cars and tracks. Open shelving equipped with a variety of resources for fine motor skill development including puzzles, magnets and jigsaws.

Outdoor Area:

The service had one large outdoor separated by a wooden fence for the younger and older child. The younger area had resources that were size appropriate including plastic tunnels, see saws and slides. This area had a shock absorbing ground surface to ensure safety. A large shed was stocked with a variety of toys and equipment that could be brought outside for play.

The older children’s area provided an extension of the indoor care rooms. On the day staff members were observed to set up the outdoor play area. Warm water was poured into the water table to provide comfort to the child as they played. Ride on toys, balance bikes and tractors provided opportunities for gross motor skill development. Building blocks were provided for construction. Mud kitchens, black boards, small world resources and a library area were provided to ensure children had access to a wide range of resources both indoors and outdoors. Sand trays and bark trays were provided for sensory development.

(1) (b)

Rest areas were provided in all care rooms. These areas consisted of child size settee, cushions and soft matting creating a place of comfort to rest or read a book.

The service had two designated sleep rooms with four standard cots. All cots had the appropriate safety mattress, waterproof protectors and individual clean bed linen. Sleep room temperatures were maintained in the recommended range for comfort of the sleeping child.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service demonstrated that all food provided to the preschool children was adequate suitable and nutritious. The service had a healthy eating policy in place and was observed to be adhered to on the day of inspection. Snacks sent in from home included yoghurts, fruit, sandwiches with a variety of fillings including ham and cheese. The main meal of the day provided by the service was pasta bolognaise with a selection of fruit served after dinner. Water stations were provided in all care rooms and children had access to water throughout the day. A

review of the main meals provided in the service included Roast chicken, vegetables and potatoes, chicken curry, beef stew, fish fingers and mash. All meals provided were in line with the service healthy eating policy.

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 into the service was found to be secured upon the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service, which prevented persons entering unauthorised and children from leaving the building unsupervised.
- All cleaning products in the care rooms were stored on high level shelving out of the reach of children.
- Materials and resources were maintained in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the preschool children.
- There were three highchairs with harness safety straps fitted in good condition.
- Leads and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.
- The outdoor perimeter was secure with waste bins stored out of reach of children.
- The equipment and materials in use on the day were well maintained and free from hazards. Records demonstrated that a risk assessment was carried out by staff prior to the use of the outdoor play and daily risk assessments were completed indoors.

Infection Control:

- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to mealtimes and after messy play and snack times in all care rooms.
- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean, with cleaning schedules displayed and up to date in each care room.
- Children were observed to wash their hands regularly including before snacks and meals.
- Child friendly hand wash posters with picture instructions were placed above the wash basins.

- Perishable items in the children's lunchboxes were refrigerated prior to eating.
- Nappy changes were carried out in line with infection control procedures.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was administered on the day of inspection.
- On discussion with the staff members, they were aware of the medication administration policy and their responsibilities.

Safe Sleep:

- Sleep was observed to be child led, responding to cues of the preschool child.
- Standard cots were available for children under two years of age while stackable floor beds were provided for those over two years of age.
- Room temperatures were maintained within the safe sleep range at 19°C.

Fire Safety:

- Child friendly picture evacuation plans were displayed on the doors of the care rooms.
- Evacuation routes remained free from hazards.

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 for children available to the preschool children throughout the operating hours of the service.

(2) (a) (b)

First aid boxes were clearly located in all care rooms and stocked adequately to meet the needs of the preschool child in an emergency.

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)
- The service demonstrated that fire drills occur monthly as evidenced by records with the most recent fire drill recorded as 21 January 2026.
- (b)
- A record of the number and type of firefighting equipment was maintained with the most recent service date of the 20 October 2025.
- (2) (c)
- These records were made available to the authorised person on the day of inspection.
- (3)
- The person in charge is aware of the regulatory requirement to retain these records from a period of 5 years from their creation.
- (4)
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in all care rooms.

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

The service demonstrated that all preschool children were supervised at all times.

During play indoors, staff members working in teams were observed to have good communication between each other ensuring all staff were aware of what children they had responsibility for. Those staff members working alone ensured they positioned themselves appropriately to ensure children were in sight. If a staff member required support an internal phone line was provided to call to another room for assistance.

At meal times, staff members sat alongside the children promoting independence and offering support when needed. The young babies were placed in highchairs and encouraged to self-feed, supervised by staff.