

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LM038		
Name of Service:	Tullaghan Community Preschool		
Address of Service:	Carberry Coast, Tullaghan, Co. Leitrim		
Eircode:	F91 NX38		
Name of Registered Provider:	Edel Gavigan		
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional		
Date(s) of Inspection:	01/05/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM 9
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84		
Inspection undertaken by:	S Killeen		
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

Tullaghan Community Preschool is a not-for-profit part time early years' service. The service is registered to cater for children aged 2 to 6 years, operating from 9:00am to 2.00 pm five days per week, 38 weeks per year.

The service operates from a converted building in Tullaghan, which is situated on the Leitrim/Donegal border on the outskirts of Bundoran town. There is one large playroom, a kitchen, an office, a storeroom and sanitary accommodation. A designated outdoor play area is available to the rear of the building.

Staffing

There are a total of five adults including the registered provider employed within the service to 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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,15,19,23,27 and 28. 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.

(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 manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person to deputise in the event of their absence.
- (b) The staff roster demonstrated that the designated person or named deputies were present at all times during the operation of the service.
- (c) Information on the service's management structure was provided during the inspection identifying the lines of authority, roles and responsibilities of employees.

(2)

At the time of inspection, the person in charge confirmed that there were 5 staff members who worked in the service. With reference to the above listed elements of Regulation 9, recruitment records of the 5 staff members were reviewed and the following was available.

(a) (b)

Written and validated references were on file for 5 staff members from a past employer or in cases where there were no past employers, a source other than a previous employer.

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

(4) Evidence of completion of a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent was on file for 5 staff members who required it.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(d) International police vetting was not on file for one staff member whose employment record indicated they had lived outside of the jurisdiction for a period greater than six months.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

We have placed a check list in our staff files that state what needs to be in the file including international police vetting needs to be on file. The check list will be permanently on all the staff files going forward.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence submitted or required documentation.

Summary Comment

The requirement for this regulation has been met and required vetting has been submitted to the early years inspectorate.

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)
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children during the inspection.
- (2)
There were 18 children in total attending the service being supervised by 5 adults.

The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to at all times throughout the inspection.
- (8)
The Register Provider demonstrated that there were at minimum of two adults on the premises at all times during the operation of the part time service.

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.*

(3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (1) or (2) shall be open to inspection on the premises by-
(c) an authorised person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in 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.

(5) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 2 years from the date on which the child attends the service.

Compliance Information

1) (a-i)

Ten records of the children attending the service were reviewed. The required information including the authorisation to collect the child, details of illness or special needs of the child, the emergency contact and record of immunisation if any were fully completed for each child.

(3)

(c) The records as identified above were made available to the inspector for review in all the care rooms.

(4)
The person in charge confirmed that the records are retained for the required period as set out in the regulations

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)

Physical and Material Environment:

- The playroom was comfortable, inviting and a suitable space for the preschool children. ensure that each child's learning, development and well-being is facilitated within the daily pre-school service
- Each interest area was arranged and resourced with sufficient materials to offer challenge and learning opportunities to the children.
- The home corner and shop area feature specially constructed, child-sized shops and a hairdresser's station.
- The room featured comfortable, child-sized seating next to the library area, creating a cozy and inviting reading space. Adjacent to this was a dress-up area complete with a mirror and vanity table, encouraging imaginative play.
- The sensory area included a sand play section, offering children a tactile and engaging experience that supports sensory development and imaginative play.
- A large blackboard with coloured chalk encouraged children's mark-making and early writing skills. Children were also supported in expressing themselves through painting and colouring activities.
- The construction area provided a range of opportunities for children to develop both gross and fine motor skills. Large cardboard blocks and wooden dividers encouraged open-ended play, allowing children to use their imagination and creativity freely.

- A small electric microwave was available for children to explore basic cooking experiences. The area was also equipped with a sink, dining set, toaster, and kettle, providing opportunities for interactive and imaginative play while supporting the development of practical life skills.
- Wall displays in the room include a photo board of children doing a variety of activities in the service and a display area for the children's current artwork.
- All the play educational resources were accessible to the children at their height. Appropriate size tables and chairs or locations near interest areas to provide children with a choice of tabletop activities or floor play.

Basic Needs

- All food consumed by the children while attending the preschool was provided by the service. Morning snack was served at 11:08 a.m. and included a selection of Weetabix, corn flakes, Rice Krispies, bananas, oranges, blueberries, apples, and cucumber.
- Drinking water and milk was available throughout the session, and adults were observed sitting with the children during mealtimes, using the opportunity to engage in conversations led by the children.
- Children were able to access the toilet facilities as needed, in line with their individual routines. Child-friendly handwashing posters were displayed in the toilets to promote proper hygiene practices.
- Good general hygiene was observed, with staff supervising handwashing to ensure it was carried out effectively. Tissues were readily available for runny noses, and parents provided spare clothing as needed
- Protective plastic aprons were used during messy play activities, supporting personal care and maintaining cleanliness
- Staff responded promptly and appropriately to children's needs. For example, when a child became upset after another child knocked down a block structure he had built, staff calmly sat with both children. They explained the rules to the child who had knocked over the blocks and helped him understand how his actions had affected the other child, promoting empathy and respectful play.
- The daily routine supported free movement, with short periods of adult-initiated activities interspersed with opportunities for free play. Children were encouraged to choose their own activities and move independently between the various interest areas within the room.
- Independence was nurtured in age-appropriate ways, including self-feeding, toileting, dressing for home time, and tidying up after activities

- Children’s need for rest was accommodated within the room. A quiet corner included child-sized couches and quilted robes, which children could use during free play if they wished to rest. A regulation area was also available, featuring colour zones that allowed children to indicate how they were feeling by pointing to a corresponding colour.
- This area included an emotions poster and an affirmation station to support children in recognising and expressing their emotions.
- Staff were observed using positive strategies to support behaviour management.

Supporting relationships around children:

- Children were encouraged and supported to interact positively with each other. Staff promoted cooperative play by guiding children to take turns, share resources, and offer help to their peers.
- Consistent staffing was observed, with the same adults present each day. This continuity contributed to the development of secure and trusting relationships between children and staff.
- Interactions between staff and children were warm and respectful, with adults engaging at the children’s level and maintaining meaningful conversations.
- Children were actively listened to and received verbal encouragement during their participation in activities.
- Teamwork among staff was evident. They communicated effectively, shared responsibilities, and supported one another throughout the session, contributing to a calm and well-organised environment.
- A sense of belonging was promoted through the use of individually labelled spaces for children’s personal items, as well as displays of their artwork and family photographs.
- Children’s language and communication skills were supported through ongoing conversations, storytelling, music, and nursery rhymes.
- The curriculum incorporated changing themes, which provided opportunities for vocabulary development and language enrichment children were observed counting in English, Irish and Spanish.

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 to the service was secured by a locked door with high reach handle that the children could not access. Staff were vigilant when opening and closing the door to prevent a child from exiting the premises unsupervised. Visitor access was controlled by the main door being kept locked and could only be opened from the inside.
- The outside area was secured by perimeter walls and gates. Gates at all three exits had secure locks in place.
- The Cleaning products in the service were securely stored and out of child reach.
- Toys and play equipment and materials were developmentally appropriate, kept in good repair and did not pose an injury risk to children.
- The designated emergency exit doors were observed to be clear and unobstructed.
- Thermostatically controlled hot water was available for use by the children to facilitate safe and hygienic hand washing.
- Blind cords were secure to prevent risk of injury.
- Waste disposal facilities were inaccessible to the preschool children.
- There were no trailing flexes in the service.
- The service had a risk assessment system for checking that toys and equipment were not broken, in a clean condition and maintained in a good state of repair.
- The person in charge clearly identified to the early years' inspector, the drop off and collection procedures for children and on the day of inspection this was observed by the inspectors.

Infection Control:

- The inspector observed that the children washed their hands regularly throughout the inspection to include, prior to consuming snack, after outdoor play and after toileting. Suitable hand washing facilities were provided with supplies of liquid soap.
- The sanitary accommodations had foot operated lidded bins.
- The pre-school room was well ventilated with the windows open at times throughout the inspection.

- Tabletops were cleaned immediately prior to children’s snack break. Children were seen being encouraged to clean up after snack.
- Cleaning schedules were in place and maintained, staff were observed cleaning the bathroom after the children had finished snack.

Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not administered on the day of inspection; written parental consent was available should medication be required to be administered to a child.
- On interview staff members were aware of safe practices with regards to the safe storage and administration of medication should it be required.

Fire Safety:

- All exit routes were free from obstruction monthly fire drills had been carried out last one completed 24th February 2025. The fire exits were easily recognisable and not obstructed.

Outing:

- The preschool children took part in a local community outing to a construction site. Staff were aware of the relevant requirements and clearly understood their roles and responsibilities in planning and supervising the outing

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

- During the inspection, the required ratio of qualified adults to children was maintained, ensuring that every child was under the supervision of a qualified staff member.
- The staff were observed positioning themselves within the rooms to allow them to engage effectively with the children, offering supportive and attentive supervision.
- During mealtimes staff sat closely with the children at the table’s, ensuring help was given when required.
- The outdoor area was designed to ensure that the children can be kept within sight and sound of the staff.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

- The registered provider ensured adequate insurance was in place for the full day care service for 25 children up until 27 March 2026.