

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015LS044
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Name of Service:	Durrow Community Playgroup Ltd.
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Address of Service:	Durrow Community Playschool, Kilkenny Road, Durrow, Co. Laois
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Eircode:	R32 Y67V
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Name of Registered Provider:	Caroline Kelly
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	13/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	19	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co. Offaly.
Inspection undertaken by:	K. Murphy
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

The service is registered as a sessional service for children aged between 2 to 6 years. The service is open Monday to Friday between the hours of 09:15 and 12:45. The Early Years' Service is located in a community facility. A pre-school room, a breakout room and a kitchenette are provided. An outdoor play area is attached to the rear and side of the service. The service is located on the outskirts of the village of Durrow, County Laois. Onsite parking and set down facilities are available.

Staffing

Four adults are employed in the service. The person in charge and one other adult were present and working directly with the children. The registered provider who does not work directly with the children was not present during the inspection.

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.

Regulation 9- Management and recruitment - (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (4)

Regulation 11 -Staffing levels - (1)(3)

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Regulation 19- Health, welfare and development of child - (1)(a)

Regulation 20 – Facilities for Rest and Play - (1)(a)(b) (4)

Regulation 22- Food and Drink

Regulation 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 24- Checking In and Out and Record of Attendance (3)(4)

Regulation 25- First aid - (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26 -Fire safety measures - (1)(a)(b) (4)

Regulation 28 – Insurance

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*

(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 person in charge was present and available in the service throughout the inspection.

(b)

The person in charge and a deputy were on site for the duration of the inspection.

Five files including the file of the registered provider were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

The required number of written validated references were available in respect of the five files reviewed from past employers or from a source other than a past employer.

(c)

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A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the five files reviewed.

In respect of four of the five files reviewed the service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. The service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in respect of one of the five files reviewed. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)
Police vetting was available in respect of two adults who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)
Staff working directly with children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at levels 5 to 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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)
The ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.

(3)
There were nineteen children attending the session supervised directly by two adults.

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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

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

During the inspection the children were engaged and enjoyed play activities that included free play, story time, music and movement and circle time supported by the staff members. A key person system was in operation in the service. The staff were positive towards the children and were familiar with each child, their personalities and their daily routines. Children were happy and content with their carers. Seamless transitions were noted as the children were given a five-minute lead in time to change from one activity to another. Children were encouraged to be independent, washing their hands before the mid-morning snack, putting on and taking off coats and hats for outdoor play.

The pre-school room was bright and colourful with children's artwork displayed. A range of developmentally appropriate experiences to meet children's learning needs was available. Age and stage appropriate toys and equipment were accessible to children on low level shelving.

The service works in partnership with parents and guardians. Parents were observed to collect their children from the outdoor area after the ECCE session. A verbal handover was provided to parents at this time. A parent notice board was displayed in the entrance area of the service. A social media application is used as a platform to provide regular updates during the year which highlights the children's general play activities or any projects and events taking place in the service.

Each child had their own learning journal depicting their play and work activities since the new term had commenced.

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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.

(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)(a)

Suitable play equipment was provided indoors and outdoors which included toys and equipment for construction, tabletop activities, arts and crafts, sand play, water play and home corners.

(b)

Soft furnishings were available in the pre-school room for children to rest and relax.

(4)

The outdoor play area located to the rear of the premises consisted of concrete and natural grass surface areas. The area was equipped with freestanding basketball hoops, a digging area, dinosaur land, a construction area and multi-purpose activity trays for sensory play and seed planting. A concrete wall and wooden gate secured the perimeter of the outdoor area.

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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

Parents and guardians provided the mid-morning snack for their child. A refrigerator was available for the storage of perishable food products. The children drank water from their individually identifiable water containers which were accessible to the children throughout the morning. The children were observed to eat a variety of sandwiches, wraps and crackers with fillings as well as a selection of fruit, vegetable and dairy products.

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 service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

Supplies of paper hand towel and liquid soap were available in the sanitary accommodation. The water temperature at the wash hand basins in the sanitary accommodation was recorded at 27°C. The sanitary accommodation was ventilated by natural ventilation.

Administration of Medication:

No medication was administered during the inspection. Temperature reducing medication was available in a secure location in the service if a child presented with a high temperature.

Fire Safety:

The emergency exit routes were unobstructed from the premises. A fire assembly point was noted in the outdoor play area.

Outing:

The person in charge stated that outings were not carried out from the service.

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Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

The most recent Garda vetting disclosure presented in respect of one of the staff members was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

This non-compliance was observed on the previous inspection 29 February 2024. The preventive action following this inspection failed to prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The registered provider stated in the response that renewal of Garda vetting was immediately applied for the staff member. The garda vetting disclosure was returned, reviewed and submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

(Garda vetting disclosure application confirmation included).

A reminder date has been set for all staff members for when their Garda vetting is up for renewal.

Summary Comment

In respect of the corrective actions taken documentary evidence was submitted to the office of the Early Years Inspectorate and reviewed by the Early Years Inspector. The regulatory requirements remain outstanding until the Garda vetting disclosure is returned and submitted to Tusla.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing referred to in paragraph (3)(b) is retained for a period of one year from the date to which it relates.

Compliance Information

(3)(a)

All entry to the service with the exception of (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) must be approved by a staff member.

(b)

A visitor log was in place to record the details and purpose of all visitors to the service.

(4)

The visitor log is retained throughout the annual operation of the service.

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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 person in charge and one other staff member was qualified in First Aid Response (FAR). Both staff members were available on the premises during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)

First aid boxes were identifiable and readily available in the service.

(b)

A first aid box was accessible to the adults caring for the children in the pre-school service.

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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)

Written records for completed fire drills were available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on 03 February 2026.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment in the premises were serviced in September 2025. The smoke alarms in the premises were serviced in March 2026.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in conspicuous positions throughout the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service and the expiry date noted as 27 March 2026.