

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MH158
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	The Village Preschool, Drumbaragh
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	The Crea Centre, Drumbaragh, Kells, Co. Meath
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<b>Eircode:</b>	
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Celine Govern
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day , Part Time , Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	13/01/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	30	PM	10
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Tusla Early Years Inspectorate Meath Child & Parent Support Hub, Commons Road, Navan, Co. Meath
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D.Murray
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	Not Applicable
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### Description of service

The Village Pre-school is a privately operated Early Years Service which provides full day care, part-time and sessional care and education to children from 2 to 6 years. A school aged service is also provided. The pre-school is situated in the Crea Centre and comprises of 2 care rooms, Room 1 & 2 and a school aged room. Hours of operation are from 8am to 6pm and eligible children can participate in the Early Childhood Care and Education scheme (ECCE).

The rooms were as follows:

Room 1 provides care and education to children ranging in age from 2 years to 2 years 8 months.

Room 2 provides care and education to children ranging in age from 2 years 8 months to 6 years.

Additional facilities include children and staff sanitary facilities, 2 kitchens, storage rooms and an office. An outdoor space is located to the rear of the premises.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs a manager, 5 childcare staff and an administration staff member. A student who is completing the Early Childhood Care and Education course was on placement on the day of 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.

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 co-operation of the registered provider, manager, 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

(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 service had a designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b) A designated person in charge was on the premises when the inspectors arrived unannounced to carry out the inspection.

(2) Nine staff files were reviewed including the registered providers.

(a)&(b) Eighteen validated written references were available either from a past employer or from a reputable source.

(c) Garda vetting disclosure was available for 9 staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was available for 1 staff member who had resided outside the jurisdiction for a period of more than 6 consecutive months as an adult.

(4) Seven childcare staff who work directly with children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### 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.*

*(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-*

*(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,*

#### Compliance Information

(1) Present on the morning of the inspection was a designated person in charge, 1 childcare staff and a student on placement caring for 14 children. The manager and 2 childcare staff had gone on a trip to the library with an additional 16 children. The registered provider arrived to the service at 10:40am.

(2) On the morning of the inspection the following adult to child ratios were observed:

ECCE Room 1 had 14 children ranging in age from 2.3 years to 5.7 years being cared for by 2 staff and a student on placement. Sixteen children ranging in age from 2.8 years to 5 years being cared for by 3 staff members returned from the library to the service at 11:45am. Twelve children were attending on a sessional basis with the remainder of the children attending on a part time /full day care basis.

(8)(a) According to the staff roster the registered provider ensured that there were always two adults on the premises when the service was in operation.

### 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) The following observations were made on how each child's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life in the service:

##### Basic needs:

- The service embraced outdoor play and learning with the children having the options of playing and dining outside or inside. The majority of the children remained outdoors for the morning session. The outdoor space had areas of interest which supported children's play and curiosity with adequate space for children to play alone and in small and large groups. Children were observed enjoying imaginative, energetic and messy outdoor play with both their peers and staff members. Staff supported children's learning with activities that were observed to be fun and creative. During activities children were offered choices and sought out staff members who readily acknowledged and encouraged the children's efforts and accomplishments. Sixteen older children from the group had gone on a trip to the library for activities supporting literacy development.
- Children's individual care needs were well supported during nappy changing and when going to the toilet with gentle reminders regarding hand washing.

##### Supporting relationships around children:

- At snack time jovial conversation was heard between the staff member and children which created a positive atmosphere for developing relationships. Any child that became upset were nurtured and cuddled until they were ready to re-join the group. Staff members were heard encouraging children to be mindful of the feelings of those around them which promoted an ethos of friendship and working together.
- The service showed a positive regard towards the families of the children and family links were nurtured in the service with family photographs displayed in the care rooms which gave a sense of identity and

belonging. Engagement with families and parents was facilitated by the daily sharing of information at drop off and collection which was supported by electronic means.

### 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-
- (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.
- (3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-
- (a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(b) Cosy areas consisting of soft furnishings, mats and cushions were available in the care rooms for children to take a break from activities if needed. Stackable beds were available and placed in a quiet area in the ECCE Room 1 for children requiring sleep.

(3)(a) An outdoor space was located to the rear of the premises, which was enclosed by walls and fencing with secure gates. The surface area consists of cement and woodchip. Areas of interest included a large sand pit with a mud kitchen, ride on toys, wooden playhouse, see saw, tyres, swing, climbing frame, 2 plastic playhouses, wooden picnic benches for outdoor dining and activities and 2 storage sheds.

### 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 provided all the meals with a combination of the main hot meal prepared on site and supplied by a catering company. A 4-week menu plan was available with a variety of dishes ranging from meat, chicken, fish along with a varied hot and cold snack menu. On the day of the inspection at 10:30am the children had yogurt, ham, crackers and fruit. Dinner was served at 1pm which consisted of Chicken stew with potatoes and vegetables.

Afternoon snack was served at 3:30pm which consisted of toasted sandwiches, yogurts and fruit. Additional snacks were available for children staying late. Water and milk were the drinks of choice.

### 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 following safety measures were in place on the day of inspection:

- When the inspector arrived at the service, access to the service was through a coded gate from the car park. The outdoor play area was enclosed by fencing. These security measures restricted unauthorized persons from gaining access to the service and prevented children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Both indoor and outdoor risk assessments were conducted on a daily basis.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- All furniture and display units had a stable base with no risk of toppling identified.
- The emergency exit doors were unobstructed.

##### Infection Control:

The following infection control measures were observed:

- The hand-washing policy was implemented in practice with appropriate hand washing for staff and children at all times.
- The service was clean with cleaning schedules maintained on a daily basis.
- Liquid soap and paper hand towels were provided in all sanitary facilities. The water temperature at the sinks was 38°C which was adequate for effective hand washing
- All bins for contaminated waste were foot pedal operated.