

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015MN011
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Carrickmacross Preschool Playgroup
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Catholic Hall, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan
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<b>Eircode:</b>	A81 DV22
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Rosemary McEnaney
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<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	14/10/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	27	PM	-
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	No.18 The Grange Plantation Road Monaghan
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S Skinnader
<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

Carrickmacross Preschool Playgroup is a privately owned service which is in operation since 2010. It provides a sessional service to children aged 2 years – 6 years. The service caters for a maximum of 44 children. The service partakes in the ECCE scheme and opens from 9.15am – 12.15pm Monday to Friday. This service is located in the basement area of a local hall in the town of Carrickmacross Co. Monaghan. There are 2 care rooms, kitchen areas, sanitary accommodation, and an outdoor play area to the side of the building.

### Staffing

There are 10 staff members including the registered provider employed in the service who work directly with the preschool 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.

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 registered provider, 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) & (b) The service had a designated person in charge and named deputy person to deputise as required. Both were on the premises when the inspector arrived on the premises and were present throughout the inspection.

(c) A clear management structure was in place in the service.

Ten staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection:

(2)(a) There were

- 2 written and validated references available for 9 members of staff.
- One staff member had 1 written and validated reference.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 10 staff members. The service had adhered to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was available for the 1 staff member who had lived outside the Irish jurisdiction as an adult for a period of 6 months or more.

(4) All staff who worked directly with the preschool children had at least a minimum of a Level 5 childcare qualification.

## Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) One staff member required a second written and validated reference.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

The staff member was asked to submit a reference which was then checked and validated by the manager.

Targeted questions were asked to the referee before validating the reference.

The registered provider will ensure a more robust approach to the references moving forward when hiring new staff and ensuring they are verified verbally- clear questions will be asked to ensure the registered provider is getting a clear picture of the candidate.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of written and validated reference.

### Summary Comment

The registered provider's response and supporting evidence was reviewed and accepted. The non-compliance has been addressed.

## 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) On the day of inspection when the inspector arrived unannounced to the service there were 2 rooms in operation. During the inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.

(3) The adult: child ratios observed in the care room was correct.

- In Preschool Room 1 there were 3 staff members caring for 18 preschool children aged 3-4 years of age.
- In Preschool Room 2 there were 2 staff members caring for 9 preschool children aged 2 years and 9 months – 3 years of age.

## 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:*

*(i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

## Non-Compliance Information

(i) The staff rota present on the day of inspection was inadequate for example it did not specify the hours each staff member worked each day.

(k) Four accident / incident forms were reviewed and 3 had not been signed by the manager in the service.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

(i) The registered provider has updated a new staff roster/ staff sheet – it states the ECCE hours worked each day, dated individually and the staff working are clearly visible. The new updated roster sheet has now replaced the old roster sheet.

(k) The accident book has been co-signed and all staff were verbally made aware at the staff meeting that the book need to be co-signed immediately.

This requirement will be a point of focus during new staff training to ensure.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Copy of new staff rota.

## Summary Comment

The registered provider's response was reviewed and accepted. The non-compliances are addressed.

## 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-*

*(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

There was 1 care room in operation on the day of the inspection.

(1)(a) The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that children's learning, development, and well-being was facilitated in the service:

### Basic Needs:

- All lunches were brought in by the children. Assistance was given to the children who required help with opening their lunches and certain foods. Staff were observed to sit with the children at lunch time. A water station was available at a low level and accessible to the children. A child who forgot their drink was

observed to go and get themselves a glass of water at lunchtime. Lunches were appropriately stored in the fridge.

- All children had a change of environment to the outdoor area. Children were dressed appropriately to go outside.
- Independence with toileting was promoted for the children who were toilet trained and discreet supervision was also provided by staff. Gentle handwashing reminders were also given to the children and hands were washed after toileting and after coming in from outdoors.
- Tissues were available in the room and noses were observed to be cleaned when necessary. Plans with an outside agency had been commenced to assist children who required additional supports.

### Supporting Relationships

- A key worker system was in place and feedback was predominantly verbal at drop off and collection. Staff confirmed a phone messaging application was also used to communicate with parents. The messaging application was used to contact a parent whose child was upset on arrival to show they had settled well.
- The children were observed to be provided with sensitive care and nurturing interactions by the staff. Soft tones, positive and respectful language were observed in interactions between the staff and children in the rooms. For example, *“you’re doing great work!”*, *“great job”*, *“are you okay .....?”* and *“would you like help?”*. The children were observed to seek out the adults for assistance.
- Staff were observed to sit with children during indoor tabletop activities and there was a helper system in operation in the rooms where a child would assist with daily tasks such as giving out the lunches.

### Physical and Material Environment

- There were a good range and variety of age-appropriate toys and materials available in the care rooms. These supported many areas of development such as fine motor skills, role play and sensory development.
- Toys and equipment were positioned on open low-level shelving in all rooms which promoted independence and facilitated choice for the children enabling them to choose which items they wished to play with.

### Programme Of Activities

- A daily routine of long and short-term plans was on display in the rooms.
- Activities that promoted the children’s language development such as the social conversations between the staff and children were also observed.

- A variety of the children’s art and photographs of activities from the year were in the children’s scrapbooks, including traffic light art, autumnal leaf art plus hand and footprint art and glitter displays.
- Staff had recorded observations of the children’s interests and activities.

### 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.*

*(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)(b) There was a soft comfortable area in Preschool Room 1. It consisted of 2 large cushions and also there was a low bed within the home area with soft throws and cushions for a child to take a break and relax from activities if they wished.

(4) The outdoor area consisted of a long concrete surface that ran the length of the building. Gates at each end were secured and an emergency fire exit stairway was also gated off. There was a supply of ride on toys and bubble cars, water shoots, wall mounted blackboards and a small climbing frame and slide.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) The soft area in Preschool Room 2 was inadequate as it consisted of a small wooden sofa with plastic seating and 3 small wooden chairs. This is not inviting for a child to go and relax or lie down on if they so wished or to take a break from activities.

#### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

A small soft fold away sofa was purchased. This can also pull out into a soft bed type mattress. A rug and soft cushions were also added to the area to make it cosy and inviting.

This will remain in the setting and all staff are aware that cosy inviting areas are now essential.

## Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

## Summary Comment

The Inspectorate have reviewed the registered provider's response, the non-compliance has been addressed and will be for review at the next 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.*

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

1. There were a number of unprotected sharp corners in both rooms; for example on the brown shelving units and child sized white table which were a potential injury hazard to the children.
2. The children were observed to play on a mini trampoline in the outdoor area. These are prohibited in childcare settings and are a health and safety risk.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. Self-adhesive furniture corner protectors were purchased and have been stuck on all unprotected sharp corners. The corner protectors are visible and all staff have been made aware to ensure they are replaced if they fall off. Furniture protector check added to the Daily Risk assessment.
2. The mini trampoline was removed from the service.

## Supporting documentation submitted

### General Safety:

Copy of Daily risk assessment

## Summary Comment

The Inspectorate have reviewed the registered provider's response and it is accepted. The non-compliance has been addressed.

### 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.
- (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 was maintained of all fire drills which had been completed in the service, the last recorded 24/9/25.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the fire-fighting equipment dated 18/8/25 and 15/5/25 respectively.
- (4) Notices of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire were conspicuously displayed in the premises.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider had adequate insurance cover for a maximum of 44 children expiring the 27/3/26.