

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015MN017
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Name of Service:	Clontibret Preschool Playschool
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Address of Service:	Tullybuck, Clontibret, Monaghan, Co. Monaghan
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Eircode:	H18 A027
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Name of Registered Provider:	Elaine Christy
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	03/03/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Hampton Court, Cootehill Road, Drumalee, Co Cavan. H12 YY84
Inspection undertaken by:	S Mc Kenna
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

Clontibret Preschool Playschool, located in the village of Clontibret Co. Monaghan is a private owned service which commenced in 1997. The service operates Monday to Friday 8.30am to 1.30pm or 9am to 2pm on a part time basis and 9am to 12 midday for the sessional ECCE scheme. The service caters for a maximum of 22 children aged 2 to 6 years of age and operates from a prefabricated building in the grounds of the local church. There is one care room for use by the preschool children, an additional room for school age care, sanitary accommodation and a kitchen area. A designated covered outdoor area is located to the rear of the premises, and in addition to this area the service has use of an astroturf field adjacent to the premises.

School aged childcare is also provided. Car parking is available to the front and side of the premises.

Staffing

There are 3 staff employed in the service which includes the registered provider and one staff member who is employed under the Access and Inclusion Model (AIM).

An additional adult was present in a work experience capacity.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9: Management & Recruitment, Regulation 11: Staffing Levels, Regulation 19: Health, Welfare & Development of Child, Regulation 23: Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child, Regulation 24: Checking In and Out and Record of Attendance, Regulation 25: First Aid and 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 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

(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 who is the registered provider, and a named person in charge to deputise in their absence.

(b) Following discussion with the registered provider, it was confirmed that when the preschool service was in operation the designated person in charge or the named person in charge were on the premises.

(2) The staff files for 3 staff members and the one adult on work experience were reviewed.

(a) Seven written and validated references from a previous employer were available on file.

(b) One written and validated reference from a reputable source were available on file.

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

(d) A review of the employment history for the 4 adults, demonstrated that no adult had lived outside the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, therefore police vetting was not required.

(4) Documentary evidence was available to confirm that the 3 staff employed to work with children, held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications, or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. A qualification for the one adult on work experience was not required.

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) On the day of inspection there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) The adult to child ratios were correct in the service when the inspector arrived unannounced and remained so throughout the inspection. The following adult to child ratios were observed:

Three adults cared for 20 children aged 3 years 2 months to 4 years 3 months.

In addition to the above, one adult on work experience was present in a supernumerary capacity.

(8) A review of the staff sign-in and out records, demonstrated that there are at least 2 adults on the premises while the full day care service is 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

(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

The following examples demonstrate how the registered provider ensured that the children's learning, development and well-being was facilitated within the daily life of the service:

Basic Needs

Heathy eating was promoted with the service. The children take in their own snacks from home which contained a variety of sandwiches, rice cakes, yogurt, cheese, smoothies, fruits and meats. The morning snack time was observed to be relaxed with the adults observed to sit with and provide support to the children where needed. The children were observed to use the toilet independently, with adults observed to be aware of the children's presence in the sanitary area and remained close by to provide help if needed. Spare clothing was stored in the service for the children, and aprons were provided for messy activities such as water play and painting activities. The children played in the outdoor astro-turf area on the day of inspection and were dressed appropriately for the weather. A rest area which had a soft fluffy mat, a child sized sofa and cushions was available for the children to rest during their time in the service.

Supporting Relationships

A key worker system was in place which allows close relationships to be formed between the adults and children. Creative art work is compiled to make a folder at the end of the school year, with regular observations sent home on a newly introduced digital application. The children displayed familiarity with the adults who cared for them and were observed to seek them out for support when needed. The adults were familiar with each child and their interests and were observed to provide support to the children at their level, such as playing on the floor in the construction area, sitting on the mat in the cosy area and sitting with the children during a pancake sticking activity. The children were observed to play well together in small and large groups, with no disagreements observed. The adults were observed to praise the children were positive interactions and turn taking was

observed. A helper display activity was in place, with children taking turns to be the helper for the cushions, the time transition hand and the leader in the line.

The adults were observed to demonstrate sensitivity, warmth and positive regard for children and their families. The adults respected parental wishes and preferences in caring for their children. The adults were observed to work well together and transitions were smooth with no interruptions observed. Communication with parents is in person at arrival and collection times and through a digital application.

Physical And Material Environment

The care room was spacious and well laid out to allow free flow movement from one area to another. Bright colourful displays were on the walls to include “All about Me” “My Family Tree” “Birthdays” “Who is here today?” displays, emotion posters, and creative artwork by the children. The room was laid out with designated play areas such as construction area, home corner, dress up and role play, water tray, sand tray, painting easel, floor play areas with toys, colouring table and tabletop areas for play with connection toys such as jigsaws and threading.

The materials were freely available and accessible to the children on low level shelves, which nurtures the children’s independence in retrieving and replacing the toys and play materials by themselves.

A covered outdoor area to the rear of the prefab was available for the children’s use. Wooden flooring with artificial grass mats was provided as the ground surface. Rocking toys, a play kitchen, a playhouse and building and stacking toys were provided in this area.

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 observed on the day of inspection:

- Upon the inspectors arrival the premises were appropriately secured to prevent a child from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises.
- The designated outdoor area was observed to be hazard free and was secured with high level fencing and a lockable gate.
- Suitable handrails were provided at entrance and exits ramps/steps.
- The kitchen area was inaccessible to the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of the reach of children.

- Fire exits remain free from obstruction during the inspection.

Infection Control:

The inspector observed the following infection control measures in practice within the service:

- Warm running water, hand soap and an electric hand dryer was provided for handwashing.
- The children were observed to wash their hands after using the toilet, after gluing and painting activities and before their snack.
- Sanitary areas were ventilated with openable windows.
- The play equipment and materials used by the children on the day of the inspection were observed to be maintained in a clean condition.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. Garda vetting was available for the three staff and one adult on work experience. However, a vetting disclosure for the one adult was not dated within the previous three years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.
2. A small section of the floor covering at the entrance door to the care room was beginning to lift off the floor, therefore posing a trip hazard.

Infection Control:

3. The children's snack items taken in from home were observed to contain perishable items such as yogurts, cheese and meat. These food items were stored in the children's bags in the hallway and not in a refrigerator at the recommended storage of 5°C or below.
4. A table covering on a table used by the children was worn in areas, therefore it could not be adequately cleaned, posing an infection control risk.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Garda Vetting has been received. All garda vetting are being updated at the moment to ensure the timeline is the same for everyone.
2. The small section of floor covering has been replaced. Minor imperfections on floor coverings will be fixed immediately.

Infection Control:

3. Children's lunches are now kept in the fridge at the recommended storage of 5 degrees C or below. Staff have all been informed all perishable lunches must be in the fridge and a laminated notice is on the fridge door.
4. Table covering has been replaced. Table coverings will be replaced as soon as a tear appears.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copy of Garda vetting received. Photograph of repaired floor covering.

Infection Control:

Photograph of lunches stored in fridge. Photograph of table covers repaired.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 23.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider used a digital application which detailed each child's arrival and departure time on a daily basis.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) The certificates on file for the two staff trained in FAR had expired. Evidence was provided demonstrating that one staff member was registered to attend FAR training on 12th & 13th of March 2025.

(2) (a) (b) The first aid box did not contain sufficient materials for the number of children in attendance. Items were noted to have passed their expiry date which included triangle bandages and eye pads.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. One member of staff is completing three Saturdays, with the last Saturday being the 24th of May. One staff member holds in date Community First Responder with extensive training in choking, fitting, heart problems, seizures, strokes and convulsions and is also an Advanced Cardiac First Response with monthly training mandatory. A FAR trainer has also been booked to come to the setting on the 24th of June to complete the training with all other staff. The FAR training will be repeated every two years; therefore every staff member will be kept up to date with the training. Following the completion of each training session I will prioritise submission of the certificates.

2. The first Aid box has been replaced and all materials in date.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of staff member Community First Responder certificate. Evidence of new first aid box.

Screenshot of email confirming FAR training was booked. A copy of registered providers FAR training certificate.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider has adequately addressed the non-compliance in Regulation 25 (1) and (2)(a)(b).

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

On the day of the inspection the inspector observed the staff members appropriately supervising the children in attendance.

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 insurance cover in place for 22 preschool children, which was valid until 27/03/2025.