

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

**TUSLA Identifier:** TU2015MO033

**Name of Service:** Claremount creche and playschool

**Address of Service:** Cluain Aoibhinn, Claremount, Claremorris, Co. Mayo

**Eircode:** F12 VE89

**Name of Registered Provider:** Pauline McCormack

**Service type:** Full Day, Part Time, Sessional

**Date of Inspection:** 03/03/2025

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	55	PM	44
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency. 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor St Mary's HQ, Castlebar, Co Mayo. F23HP58
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	B Lavin F Kelly
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspectors

**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** Click or tap here to enter text.

### Description of service

Claremount creche and playschool is located in a residential area of Claremorris in county Mayo. The service is registered to provide full day care, part-time and sessional services to children aged from 0 to 6 years from 07:45-18:00 hours. The service is also registered to provide school aged childcare services. The service has five playrooms, a separate sleep room, a kitchen, office and sanitary facilities. There are enclosed outdoor play areas with play equipment provided for the children on the premises.

### Staffing

At the time of the inspection there was 16 adults in the service including the registered provider who works directly with the children, a cook and two students on placement.

### 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 regulations 9: Management and Recruitment

11 Staffing Levels

15 Record of a Preschool Child

19 Health, Welfare and Development of Child

### 25 First Aid.

However, on inspection additional non-compliances which posed a risk were identified under Regulation 23: Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of Child and Regulation 8: Notification of Change in Circumstances. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under Regulation 19. As a result, the scope of the inspection included rooms named playschool room, toddler room and wobbler room.

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.

### Additional Information

- a) An immediate action notice regarding the high temperature in the sleep room was issued by the Early Years Inspectorate to the registered provider on the 4 March 2025. The registered provider submitted a response on the 5 March 2025 to the Early Years Inspectorate in relation to the immediate action notice. The registered provider submitted evidence of an installation of a digital thermometer to check the temperatures in the sleep room to ensure they are within the 16 – 20 degrees.

### Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

## Part II - Registration and Register

### Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.*

### Non-Compliance Information

On the day of inspection, the name of the registered provider that was listed on the register of the Early Years Inspectorate, was at not the same as the person that was on the premises and in charge on the day. A change in circumstance application had been submitted to the early years inspectorate, but the contract of sale had not been completed at the time of inspection and therefore the name of the new owner was listed but that person had yet to take ownership of the company.

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

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

A change of circumstances form was completed and approved for the change in the name of the registered provider. A change in circumstances form will be completed as per the regulations in the future.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Documentation submitted to the early year's inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The actions together with the evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to have addressed the non-compliances identified on the day of 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 manager was the designated person in charge and there was a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) During the period of inspection, the service manager was on the premises.

It was confirmed that there were 19 members of staff employed in the service. There were three new members of staff employed since the last inspection and two students on work placement on the day of inspection.

These five staff files were reviewed on the day of inspection.

(2)(a) There were six written and appropriately validated references available from their most recent employer for the three adults working in the service.

- (b) There were four written and appropriately validated references available from a source other than a recent employer for two adults working in the service.
- (c) Garda Vetting disclosures were available for the staff working in the service. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting for staff members every three years.
- (d) Police Vetting disclosures were available for two adults working in the service that had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over six months.
- (4) Three adults who were working directly with the children, had evidence of an award in Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 on the National Framework of Qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education 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) There were 12 adults working directly with children on the day of inspection. Two students were on placement present in the toddler and wobbler room under the supervision of staff members.

(2) The minimum adult to child ratios were provided on the morning of inspection in accordance with the required ratios considering the ages of the children and the length of time each child spent in the service as outlined below:

- Play school room: 2 adults cared for 11 children aged between 2 and 3 years of age.
- Toddler room: 3 adults cared for 13 children aged between 1 and 2 years of age.
- Wobbler room: 2 adults cared for 5 children aged between 1 and 2 years of age.
- Montessori room: 3 adults cared for 15 children aged between 3 and 4 years of age.
- Junior preschool room: 1 adult cared for 11 children aged between 3 and 4 years of age.

One additional staff member provided relief cover for breaks and nappy changes.

(8) There two adults present in the service at all times during the inspection.

## 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.*

### Compliance Information

The registered provider developed, maintained and retained records in relation to the children attending the service. Each record in writing was kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service and contained the particulars as outlined in regulation 15 (a to i)

A total of 66 records were available for inspection and a sample total of 10 children's records were reviewed on the day of inspection. There was a record for each child attending the service.

## 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

- Drinking water was available to all children in individual beakers throughout the day.
- Children were supported during mealtimes with feeding when needed. Independence was encouraged with self-help skills.
- Children sat at a table and chairs or highchairs which were appropriate for their height and or stage of development.
- The staff were observed sitting at the child's level and chatted in a respectful manner.
- Nappy changing was carried out regularly and promptly when required. Staff members were observed speaking to children during this time and using it as an opportunity for social interaction.
- The individual sleep needs of younger children were met, and this was observed on the day by children sleeping at various intervals. Older preschool children were facilitated with a scheduled rest period in the afternoon. For children who did not require a sleep, appropriate rest facilities were available in the care rooms and children were observed spending time in this area for short periods of rest throughout the day.
- Children in the wobbler room were observed to be free to lie, roll, creep, crawl, pull themselves up and learn to walk in a safe space.
- Children in the older care rooms had easy access to the outside area throughout the day and children moved freely between both indoors and outdoors.
- The adults working with the children were sensitive and responsive in promoting positive behaviours and supported children to find positive solutions.

#### Supporting relationships

- The staff members demonstrated warmth and sensitivity in their interactions with the children. The inspector observed a child receiving comfort in the wobbler room when they woke from their nap. The staff member offered reassurance and communicated using soft gentle tones.

- In the toddler room staff supported children to engage positively with one another and the children were encouraged to engage in play activities that required turn taking and sharing. 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 provided parents and guardians with daily information, including significant events or activities involving their child, for example, verbal communication at drop of and collection times and through daily individual notebooks.
- The notebooks showed details of sleep provisions, meals, nappy changing/toileting, learning activities, and a child's likes, needs and preferences and general observations and comments.

### Non-Compliance Information

1. The privacy and dignity of the children at nappy time was not maintained as two children from two different care rooms had their nappy changed at the same time within the same space.
2. The healthy eating policy was not implemented on the day of inspection. Children were observed to eat biscuits, chocolates, chocolate bread and crisps during their snack. It is acknowledged that the registered provider had shared the healthy eating policy in place in the service with the parents.

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

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

1. Staff were reminded to only bring one child at a time in to be changed. The nappy changing policy was reviewed and amended.
2. Parents were reminded of the healthy eating policy. Staff will send home snack items that are unsuitable as per the healthy eating policy and offer the children an alternative if needed.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Documentation evidence of the nappy changing and healthy eating policy were submitted to the early years inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The actions together with the evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to address the non-compliances identified on the day of 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. Two highchairs in the Wobbler room were not used according to the manufacturer's instructions, only two out of the five-point harnesses were used when children were sitting in them, which posed a risk of falling to the children as they were not safely secured in the chairs.
2. In the Playschool room, children were observed playing with small lids from drink's containers. It was clearly stated on the containers, that the lids should not be used for children under 36 months, as they posed a risk of choking. When this was brought to attention of the staff present, they removed them immediately.
3. The metal radiator covers in the playrooms required removal, as they were preventing the radiators from being cleaned. On the day of inspection dust and dirt was evident behind the radiator in the Toddler room. The staff members informed the inspection team that they had tried to clean the area but were limited to what they could clean as the covers restricted access.

##### Infection Control:

The following posed a risk of cross infection:

4. The nappy mat in the nappy changing area was ripped, therefore it could not be effectively cleaned.
5. The nappy disposal bins that were used in the nappy changing areas were not sealable, airtight and foot pedal controlled to prevent the spread of cross infection.

##### Safe Sleep:

There was a risk to sleeping child children as outlined below:

6. Accurate sleep checks were not maintained. The time of the sleep checks were pre-populated on each sleep sheet. The name of the person who did the sleep checks was not clear on the sleep chart. The room temperatures of the room were inaccurate, the temperature was taken once and not updated throughout the day.

7. The condition of the mattresses in the cots used by the service were not well maintained. There were five cots where the mattresses required replacing. They were showing signs of wear and tear and did not fit the cots correctly.
8. The sleep temperatures of the sleep room were not maintained and kept at temperatures of between 16 °C and 20°C. The following temperatures were recorded throughout the session, when the sleep room was in use. At 12.15pm with 8 children aged between 1-2 years sleeping in the room the recorded temperature was 22.1°C. At 12.22pm with 8 children aged between 1-2 years sleeping in the room the recorded temperature was 22.9°C. At 1.15pm with 8 children aged between 1-2 years sleeping in the room the recorded temperature was 22.9°C.
9. A child was sleeping in a cot that was positioned directly adjacent to a heated radiator with a radiator temperature of 51.8°C. It is noted that there was a grid around the radiator, but it did not offer protection. This posed a potential risk of burning.
10. The wall thermometer used in the sleep room was not working and could not accurately monitor the sleep room temperature. This posed a risk to sleeping children as the sleep rooms temperatures exceed the recommended safe sleep temperature guidelines.

### Fire Safety:

The following posed a fire safety risk to the children and staff in the event of a fire.

1. The fire evacuation route in corridor between wobbler and toddler room was obstructed with items which included stackable beds and chairs.
2. Firefighting equipment in the corridor between the wobbler and toddler room was blocked and obstructed with items such as stackable beds.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

1. Two highchairs with harnesses not working correctly were removed. Staff were reminded to report any broken or damaged equipment to the manager

2. The lids were immediately removed from the room. Staff were reminded that using lids for arts and crafts is unsafe for under 3s.
3. On the 4<sup>th</sup> April 2025, a deep clean of the crèche was carried out. Metal radiator covers were removed, and the radiators were thoroughly cleaned. Radiator covers will be removed and cleaned periodically going forward

### Infection Control:

4. The nappy mat with the tear was removed and replaced with a new one. Staff were reminded to report any damaged equipment to management.
5. The nappy disposal bin was removed and replaced with a plastic, airtight and foot pedal-controlled bin.

### Safe Sleep:

6. Staff were reminded how to record sleep checks, including signing their name and continuing to monitor the temperature of the room. A colour changing thermometer was purchased to monitor the temperatures in the sleep room. The manager will do spot-checks at sleep time to ensure the sleep records are completed accurately.
7. The cot mattresses will be replaced in the coming weeks. Staff were reminded to report equipment that is damaged or in need of repair/replacement to management.
8. The new sleep room thermometer will accurately record the room temperatures. Staff were reminded how to record sleep checks including the sleep room temperature. The manager will do spot-checks at sleep time to ensure the sleep records are accurate.
9. The cot was moved out from the radiator, and temperature of the room was adjusted, and new thermometer purchased on March 5<sup>th</sup> 2025. Staff were asked to ensure the distance to the cot was enough that a child cannot reach the radiator.
10. A colour changing thermometer was purchased and staff reminded of accurately checking sleep room temperatures. The manager will do spot-checks at sleep time to ensure the sleep records are accurate.

### Fire Safety:

1. The beds were removed from the doorway and stored in a separate room. Beds now have an allocated storage space.
2. The beds were removed from the doorway and stored in a separate room. Beds have an allocated storage space.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### **General Safety:**

Photographic evidence was submitted to the early year's inspectorate.

#### **Infection Control:**

Photographic evidence was submitted to the early year's inspectorate.

#### **Safe Sleep:**

On 05/03/2025 the registered provider submitted evidence of a digital thermometer to accurately check and record the sleep room temperatures. Documentary evidence was submitted of the safe sleep policy.

#### **Fire Safety:**

Photographic evidence was submitted to the early year's inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The actions together with the evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to address the non-compliances identified on the day of inspection and will be reviewed again on next inspection.

## 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 registered provider ensured that a person trained in first aid is immediately available to the preschool children attending the service.
- The registered provider ensured that there was at least one adult trained as a First Aid Responder available to the children while the service was in operation.

### Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a) (b)

The first aid box was not suitably equipped. The first aid box contents present on the day of inspection were four wound dressings and a box of plasters. This poses a risk to children in the event of an accident.

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

##### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The first aid kit was fully restocked. A first aid officer was appointed, and a record of monthly checks is in place to ensure all used or out of date stock is replaced immediately.

##### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Evidence of the replaced first aid box items was submitted to the early years inspectorate.

#### **Summary Comment**

The actions together with the evidence submitted has been reviewed by the Early Years Inspectorate and deemed to address the non-compliances identified on the day of inspection.