

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015OY002
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Daingean Community Childcare Services Ltd
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	St. Mary's Road, Daingean, Co. Offaly
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<b>Eircode:</b>	R35 Y138
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Martina Henry
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	03/07/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	36	PM	30
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, Primary Care Centre, Church Avenue, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	R Flynn A Spain
<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

Not applicable.

### Description of service

Daingean Community Childcare Service Ltd is a community run full day care service located in Daingean town in North Offaly. The service operates between the hours of 7:00am and 6:00pm. The service offers full day care, part time and sessional care to children between the ages of 0 to 6 years. Rooms available in the single storey purpose-built service include an entrance hallway and reception area, six playrooms, sleep rooms off the baby, wobbler and toddler rooms, a kitchen, a pantry, a sluice room and an office. Separate outdoor play areas are provided directly outside the playrooms. The Baby room, Wobbler room, Toddler room, Messy (pre-ECEC) room and Brereton room were operational during the summer months.

### Staffing

The registered provider employs twenty-eight staff including a deputy manager, a person in charge, two kitchen staff and a caretaker. Both the designated person in charge and a person appointed to deputise were present on the day of inspection. The registered provider works directly with the children in the service. There were sixteen adults present in the service on the day of inspection including the registered provider, 12 staff providing direct care to the children, two kitchen staff, the person in charge, and a student.

### 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(1)(a)(b), (2) (a)(b)(c)(d), (4) – Management and recruitment,
- Regulation 11 (1)(2)(8)(a) – Staffing levels,
- Regulation 16 (h)(i)(j)(k)– Records in relation to pre-school service,
- Regulation 19 (1)(a) – Health, welfare and development of child,
- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child,
- Regulation 25(1),(2)(a)(b)– First aid,
- Regulation 26(1)(a)(b),(4)– Fire safety measures,
- 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 inspectors wish 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.

(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 a named person to deputise as required. Both the designated person in charge and the deputy person in charge were on the premises throughout the inspection on 03 July 2025.

(2)

Twenty nine staff files including the registered providers were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

Fifty four written validated references were available from past employers or from a source other than a previous employer in respect of 23 staff members and the registered provider.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for 29 staff. However, 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 3 years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)  
Police vetting was required for three staff members and was available for these staff who had lived outside of the State for a period exceeding six consecutive months as adults.

(4)  
Twenty two staff members employed to provide direct care to the 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.

## Non-Compliance Information

2 (a)(b)

1. One written validated reference from a past employer or from a source other than a previous employer in respect of four staff were not available.
2. Two written references available for one staff member from past employers were not validated.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. Written validated references from a past employer or from a source other than a previous employer in respect of four staff were provided.
2. Two written references available for one staff member from past employers have now been validated.

Management will review all references in July of every year.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Copies of written validated references.

## Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the corrective and preventive actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 9 (2)(a)(b) has been adequately 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.*

*(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)

An adequate number of adults were working directly with the children at all times during the inspection.

On arrival at the service at 10:00am there were 36 children attending the service being cared for by 13 staff. In the afternoon, at 14.30pm, there were 30 children being cared for by 12 staff members.

A student was present in the service on the day of inspection and was not part of the adult to child ratio but was supernumerary.

(2)

The adult to child ratios were maintained on the day of inspection as follows. On arrival to the service at 10:00am; There was one adult providing direct care to three children aged between 1-2 years in the Baby room.

There were two adults providing direct care to eight children aged between 1-2 years in the Wobbler room.

There were two adults providing direct care to ten children aged between 2-3 years in the Toddler room.

There were three adults providing direct care to seven children aged between 3- 4.5 years in the Messy room.

There were three adults providing direct care to eight children aged between 4-6 years in the Brereton room.

The deputy person in charge and registered provider were available to cover staff lunch breaks.

In the afternoon, at 14.30pm, there were 30 children being cared for by 12 staff members. The registered provider and the deputy person in charge were available to provide cover to the care rooms as required.

(8)(a)

On review of the service roster, it was observed that a minimum of two adults were on the premises during the operational hours of the service.

## 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:*

*(h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*

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

*(j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*

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

### Compliance Information

(1)(h)

Details of the attendance of each child was recorded at the time of entering and leaving the service.

(i)

The staff roster was available and reflected the adults working in the service on each day.

(j)

Medication administration records were reviewed in each care room. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

(k)

Accident and incidents records reviewed in both the Messy room and Baby room were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

### 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)

Meals and snacks were provided by the service. Food was freshly prepared and cooked by an onsite cook. The main hot meal served on the day of inspection was roast chicken, potatoes, carrots and turnip for lunch. The service had a two-week healthy eating menu and a healthy eating policy was in place. Children from the baby and wobbler room ate dinner together in the baby room. Dinner was observed to be pureed for the children requiring highchairs. Babies wore bibs eating their meals. Mealtimes were observed to be pleasant sociable experiences for the children. Children in the wobbler room sat at low level tables together feeding themselves while staff provided assistance if required. Cups of water were available to the children during mealtimes. Children in the wobbler room had individual labelled drink bottles.

Adequate cots and floor beds were available, and children were accommodated to sleep according to their individual requirements. Three sleep rooms with cots were available for children from the baby room, wobbler room and toddler room. Low level beds were available for older children who required a nap. The rest areas in the "Brereton" and "Messy" rooms featured low-level couches and soft floor mats in "calm corners," where books were displayed on open, low-level shelving to encourage early reading interest and promote rest and relaxation. The baby room had a rocking armchair for staff to sit on when bottle feeding or providing comfort to a child.

Children's personal care needs such as nappy changing and toileting were facilitated in a timely and respectful manner. Children were encouraged to wash their hands before meals and after toileting.

Children enjoyed freedom of movement within the care rooms. Each room was equipped with space to play, learn and develop with age-appropriate play materials to encourage each child to initiate self-directed activities. A play pen was available in the baby room with toys and soft balls. The low-level shelving in the rooms ensured that materials such as jigsaws, art equipment and vehicles, were freely available to the children. Children in the wobbler room played with the toy kitchen, puzzles, building blocks and toy animals.

Babies and younger children were observed being held and cuddled by staff and any child that became upset or unsettled was immediately attended to and reassured. Children were observed to be comfortable and familiar with the staff members.

The children were provided with the opportunity for outdoor play in the morning and afternoon. Four outdoor play areas were available to the children. The toddler outdoor area had a shock resistant surface with a variety of gross motor play materials available to encourage and invite play. Children were observed playing with footballs, a toy kitchen and trikes. A large parasol was securely in place to provide shade from the sun. Children in the “Messy” and “Brereton” room were combined for outdoor play at 11.25am and at 2.30pm. Children were observed to enjoy playing with ride on toys, playing with sand and buckets in the mud kitchen area and drawing with chalk. Outdoor sheltered areas supported by timber frames facilitated play during inclement weather and provided protection from the sun when needed. The older children had access to climbing frames, tyres and tunnels to balance on and balls to engage in gross motor play.

Parents were provided with information regarding the service such as the service statement of purpose and function, the programme of activities and the service policies and procedures on enrolment of children. An electronic application system was also used to advise individual parents and guardians of observation findings throughout the year. Staff provided verbal daily updates to parents at collection times. Children’s personal folders were maintained in the playrooms for children to take home samples of work completed and to illustrate the learning opportunities availed of. “Our day in picture” was displayed on the wall in the “Brereton room” showing photographic images of activities the children engaged in during the year.

### 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:

Access to the service was managed by staff to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises and to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. Entry was permitted via an intercom doorbell system.

Cleaning agents were stored on high level shelving out of reach of the children in the utility room. The refuse storage area outside of the building was enclosed and secured by a timber gate to prevent children gaining access when playing outdoors. The service had a pest control contract, and the last visit was recorded on 14 May 2025.

Wooden gates secured the perimeter of the premises to prevent children accessing the front of the premises and the roadway when playing outdoors.

High-level timber fencing, concrete walls and gates with latches secured the perimeters of the outdoor play areas.

##### Infection Control:

The service was clean and well-maintained on the day of inspection. Completed cleaning schedules were available in the playrooms.

Warm water, liquid soap, disposable paper towels and foot pedal operated bins were provided in the sanitary accommodation. Mechanical extract ventilation was provided in the sanitary accommodation.

Openable windows were provided in all playrooms to ensure a good supply of fresh air when children played indoors.

Children's bed linen was stored in individual labelled boxes.

##### Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was stored in children's individual boxes in the storage areas attached to each care room, out of reach of children.

##### Safe Sleep:

There was a sufficient number of cots available for children from the baby, wobbler and toddler rooms, under the age of two years and individual bed linen was supplied for these children. Additional bed linen was stored in the children's individual storage boxes.

Low level beds were available for older children who required a nap during the day. Sleep logs were maintained whilst children slept.

Sleep logs reviewed in the baby sleep room indicated that the room temperatures were maintained between 16 and 20 Celsius while children were sleeping.

### **Fire Safety:**

Fire exit signage was posted on fire doors in the service. The hallways leading to fire exits had clear passageways. A fire assembly point was posted on the stone wall at the front of the building.

### **Outing:**

The service had an outings policy and record of an annual outing the service engaged in. A record of the risk assessments conducted both prior to going on the outing and at the venue were available in the service. Written parental consent to engage in outings was included in the children's enrolment forms for the service.

## **Non-Compliance Information**

### **General Safety:**

1. Garda vetting disclosures for two staff members were not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

### **Administration of Medication**

2. Staff in the wobbler room were unaware of the practice around medication management for two children being cared for in the room. Individual care plans were not available to the staff in the wobbler room in respect of the two children on prescribed medication. This posed a risk of the staff not being aware of the procedure to follow in the event that the medication was required to be administered and the steps to take if the medication did not work and a medical emergency arose.

## **Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

### **Corrective & Preventive Action**

#### **General Safety:**

1. Garda vetting disclosures were updated.  
Staff members garda vetting will be reviewed within the required timeframe.

#### **Administration of Medication:**

2. Individual care plans have been created for children on prescribed medication and displayed in the care room.  
A template is now in use in the service for any child on medication.

## Supporting documentation submitted

### General Safety:

Garda vetting record X 2.

### Administration of Medication.

Care plan template.

## Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the corrective and preventive actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed.

## 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)

Eight staff members were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises for the hours of operation.

(2)(a)(b)

Suitably equipped first aid boxes were located on high level shelving in the preschool rooms and in areas which were accessible to staff caring for children in attendance in the service.

## 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)

Records were maintained of monthly fire drills as conducted in the service. The last monthly fire drill was recorded on 13 June 2025.

(b)

The maintenance record for the firefighting equipment confirmed that an annual service was conducted on 16 June 2025. The maintenance record for the smoke alarm system confirmed that a service was conducted on 8 May 2025.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was posted in the hallways in the service.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The service had insurance cover for a maximum of 86 children in daily attendance at any one time in a full day care service. Insurance cover is valid from the 28 March 2025 to the 27 March 2026.