

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015OY047
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Name of Service:	Tullamore Community Pre School Ltd
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Address of Service:	Arden View, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
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Eircode:	R35 F992
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Name of Registered Provider:	Gerard Galvin
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	24/03/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, SAP Office, St Loman's Campus, Springfield, Mullingar, Co Westmeath, N91 N4XC.
Inspection undertaken by:	T. Duignan
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

The service is registered as a sessional service providing a service to children aged between 2 and 6 years. The service is open Monday to Friday for 38 weeks. A sessional ECCE service operates in the morning between the hours of 09:00 and 12:00 and in the afternoon between the hours of 12:30 and 15:30.

The Early Years' Service is located in a prefabricated building within the grounds of St. Josephs National School in a residential area in the town of Tullamore, County Offaly. One pre-school room is provided. An outdoor play area is attached to the rear of the service.

Staffing

The service employs five persons and the registered provider. The registered provider is not part of the staff complement and was not present during the inspection.

A person in charge and three other staff members were present and working directly with the 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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under.

- Regulation 9 (2)(a)(b)(c)(d), (4) - Management and recruitment.
- Regulation 11(1), (3), (8)(a) – Staffing Levels.

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- Regulation 23 – Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child.
- Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance.
- Regulation 25 (1), (2)(a)(b) – First aid.
- Regulation 26 – Fire Safety.
- Regulation 27 – Supervision.
- Regulation 28 – Insurance.

however, on inspection additional non-compliances were identified under:

- Regulation 19(1)(b) – Health, Welfare and Development of Child.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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 referral was sent to the Environmental Health Office on 14 April 2026.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(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

(2)

(a), (b) The required number of written validated references were available from either a past employer or a source other than a previous employer in respect of the files reviewed.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the files reviewed.

The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4) All staff members employed in the service held a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 or higher or a recognised equivalent qualification on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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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) There were twenty children attending the service being supervised directly by four adults.
- (3) The minimum ratio of adults to children was adhered to during the day.

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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.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b)

While it is acknowledged that the children were provided with freedom of choice in their play and there was a wide variety of activities and areas of interest available to the children the following observations require a review of the practices around management of transitions, routines and children's behaviours.

1. The management of transitions in the service require to be reviewed as they were too long. It was observed that the children were sitting at tables waiting for food to be served and became bored. Some children were observed getting up and moving around the care room with their drinks, a child did not want to eat and then engaged in a noisy activity which distracted some children eating.
2. Boundaries around snack time were not managed as one child sat at the teacher's desk to eat snack rather than at the table with the other children, another child declined snack and played noisily in the care room with other children leaving their snack to join in.
3. While children were getting ready to go outdoors, some children were observed running in the care room and diving on to the floor. Other children were observed climbing on the furniture, another child was observed pushing over chairs on the floor. It is acknowledged that the staff members attempted to manage the behaviours however the children did not respond to the requests to stop their running.
4. The noise level in the room was very loud and did not create an environment conducive to suit every child's opportunity and experience for learning.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(1)(b)

1. Within the preschool going forward, we will continue to implement the smaller groups routine. Lunches are prepared early to ease the transitions around lunch time and with a smaller group at each lunch time.
2. Children are now sitting in smaller groups for lunch time at the same table. We will continue to have smaller groups eating lunch together at the same table. This will help with children focusing on the task at hand and ease their transitions from one activity to the next

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3. Dividing the group into smaller groups makes it an easier and quieter transition from inside to outside and vice versa. We will continue this routine as it is working well. It is easier for the children to focus and listen to instructions when in a smaller group.
4. By dividing the groups into smaller groups, the noise levels have reduced. We will continue with this routine as it is working well. It is easier for the children to focus and listen to instructions when in a smaller group

Supporting documentation submitted

Not required.

Summary Comment

The written response and photographic evidence submitted by the person in charge on behalf of the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 19(1)(b). This area of practice will be reviewed at the next inspection.

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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 entrance door to the care room was secured and managed by the staff to ensure the safety of the children within. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and safe storage of cleaning agents. The staff members were aware of the potential choking risks that grapes posed when asked by the inspector. The snack is provided by the service and the staff members stated that they were very observant of any food provided that had the potential risk of choking and ensured that it was cut into small pieces. They also advised the inspector they would remove any beaded necklace if they observed that a child was wearing one. The service had a system in place to manage maintenance issues.

Infection Control:

Thermostatically controlled hot water, liquid hand soap and paper towels were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying. The staff members were familiar with the importance of handwashing practice as a means to control the spread of infection in the service. They supervised children's handwashing and handwashing routines were well established. The staff were observed washing their hands also. Written cleaning schedules were maintained for the room environment which was observed to be maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not given at the time of the inspection. The staff members were familiar with the required practice when administering medication in the service. Medicine was safely stored.

Safe Sleep:

A comfortable rest area was available in the care room.

Fire Safety:

Monthly fire drills had been carried out, and staff members were familiar with fire safety evacuation procedures from the service.

Outing:

The service conducts outings and an outings policy is in place.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

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1. The main entrance door to the prefabricated building was not secured and allowed unauthorised entry to the hall/ cloakroom outside the care room. It is acknowledged that the door to the care room was secured to prevent unsupervised exit of a child.
2. There was no documentary evidence available that written daily indoors and outdoors risk assessments were completed to ensure a safe play and work environment for the children and staff.
3. The three unguarded supporting wooden beams in covered outdoor area posed an injury risk to a child if they failed to see them when playing and ran into them.

Infection Control:

4. Hanging shower curtains were used to provided privacy in the two toilet areas. This was not suitable for infection control purposes.
5. The doors to the sanitary accommodation were removed and the sanitary area was not closed off from the care room. The kitchen/food preparation area was located beside the sanitary accommodation which was not suitable for infection control.
6. An open bin was observed in the care room beside the dishwasher, and the contents were accessible to the children

Fire Safety:

7. There was no fire assembly signage in place in the outdoor area although it is acknowledged that the staff members demonstrated knowledge where the assembly point was.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Since the inspection, we have acted very quickly by getting a company to install a camera system on 22 April 2026 in place on the outside of the prefab. The camera points to the main front door. There is a screen installed inside in the main preschool room which allows us to see who is at the door. A new doorbell was installed outside to alert us when someone is calling. This allows us to have the main entrance door locked at all times. Staff now meet the children at the main front door at the beginning of each session rather than at the inside secured door. All parents were notified of the new system.
2. Staff arrive to work 15 minutes before the session and ensure that the indoor and outdoor risk assessments are done to ensure the service is safe before the children enter. A written logbook is used to record the daily risk assessments. Each one signed and dated by the staff member.

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3. The three wooden beams in the outside area were covered and secured with padded material halfway up each beam to ensure that no injury would occur if a child ran into them. This padding will be checked daily to ensure it is still secure and safe. If needed in the future it will be replaced immediately.

Infection Control:

4. We have contacted a company about measuring and fitting full length doors. We will keep in contact with the company to get a date to measure and fit the doors for the two toilet areas as soon as possible.
5. We have contacted a company about measuring and fitting full length doors. We will keep in contact with the company to get a date to measure and fit the doors for the two toilet areas as soon as possible.
6. Since the inspection, a new bin was purchased with a foot pedal for the lid to open and closed. We will check the bins during our daily safety checks to ensure all lids are open and closing using the foot pedal.

Fire Safety:

7. The recommended signage was purchased and installed inside and outside for the assembly point. Ensure signage is intact and readable. They will be replaced immediately if needed.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Three photographs
2. Document
3. Photograph.

Infection Control:

5. Photograph.

Fire Safety:

7. Photograph.

Summary Comment

The written response, documentary and photographic evidence submitted by the by the person in charge on behalf of the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is not met for Regulation 23 point 5 as the doors to the sanitary area have not been fitted. The written response submitted is accepted, and it is acknowledged that the corrective action will take time. This will be reviewed at the next inspection. All other corrective actions have been accepted.

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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.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) The registered provider ensured that each child was checked in and out of the service. This was confirmed by the written attendance records maintained in each care room.

Non-Compliance Information

(3) (a), (b) There was no visitor book available to record the inspector's entry to the premises.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(3)(a)(b) There is a visitor book with date, name, company, telephone, time in and out, reason for visit and who person authorising entry. We will ensure this book is used correctly and kept safe.

Supporting documentation submitted

Document.

Summary Comment

The written response and documentary evidence submitted by the by the person in charge on behalf of the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 24(3)(a), (b).

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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) Staff members present were trained in first aid response (FAR) and were immediately available to the children attending the service.

(2)

(a) The first aid equipment was safely stored, in a conspicuous position in the service.

(b) A suitably equipped first aid box for children was available at all times to the adults caring for the children in the two care rooms attending the service.

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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 firefighting 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 written record was available of fire drills completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill took place on 18 February 2026.
- (b) A record was kept of the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises. The firefighting equipment was serviced in October 2025, and the smoke alarm was serviced on 15 January 2025.

Non-Compliance Information

- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was not conspicuously displayed in the service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

- (4) The recommended signage was purchased and installed inside. Ensure signage is intact and readable. They will be replaced immediately if needed.

Supporting documentation submitted

Three photographs.

Summary Comment

The written response and photographic evidence submitted by the by the person in charge on behalf of the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 26(4).

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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

Children were observed being supervised by the staff caring for them in the care room, in the two sanitary areas and while playing in the outdoor area.

Non-Compliance Information

The supervision of the children was compromised at 11:45am as evidenced by the following observation:

1. The Inspector was in the hall/ cloakroom area when 2 children came into the cloakroom from the outdoor area at the rear of the premises to get their coats and bags as they were going home. There was no adult with them.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The two staff members were in the outdoor area with the children. The children were handed over to the care off their childminder from the gated outdoor area. Parents and childminders have been reminded to take the children's bags first from the hallway before collecting the children if the children are in the outside area. This will ensure a safer transition at home time, and it will ensure that the incident will not reoccur.

Supporting documentation submitted

Not required.

Summary Comment

The written response submitted by the by the person in charge on behalf of the registered provider has been assessed by the Early Years Inspectorate. Regulatory compliance is met for Regulation 27. This area of practice will be assessed at the next inspection.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date was noted to be 27 March 2026.