

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015RN007			
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Castlerea Community Playschool Ltd			
<b>Address of Service:</b>	St Patrick's Street, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon			
<b>Eircode:</b>	F45 PD90			
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Christina Mannion			
<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional			
<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	03/05/2024			
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	19	PM	n/a
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Year's Inspectorate, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon			
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	A. Kennedy			
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector			

### Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

**Conditions if applicable** | Not applicable

### Description of service

This ground floor parttime service is in a town of Castlerea, Co. Roscommon. The service is registered to cater for children on a part time basis from 9:00hrs to 14:00hrs, and an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and sessional care pre-school programmes are offered. The service caters for children aged between 2 to 6 years. The service is registered for a maximum number of 22 pre-school children, at any one time. There are two interconnected playrooms. There is a designated kitchenette for the storage of the children's snacks. A quiet rest area with child size seating and a child sized bed are available for children to rest or opt out of an activity if he/she wishes to do so. There is an outdoor play area to the rear of the premises for children's fresh air, exploration, and play.

### Staffing

The registered provider is supernumerary and not on the premises daily. There is a person in charge and there is a named deputy person in charge. There were two staff working on the premises on the day of the inspection. The staff hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 to 8, in Early Childhood Care and Education. The staff have documentary evidence of ongoing training and education.

### Methodology

Tusla's Early Years Inspectorate is the independent statutory regulator of early years services in Ireland. The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 define the duty of a registered provider to ensure the safety and well-being of children and to comply with these regulations. This Act also gives Tusla the authority to assess compliance with the regulations. The purpose of regulation in relation to early years services is to ensure that the care, safety, and well-being of children attending such services is upheld. Inspections of early years services are planned based on the following:

- Previous inspection history
- Any information received in relation to the service

The findings on inspection are based on:

- Information obtained through examination of documentation
- Direct observation
- Discussion with relevant staff

This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

Inspection findings are documented in the inspection report which is first issued in draft format to the service with an opportunity to respond to any findings.

Where statutory requirements are identified as not being met, the registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-compliance from re-occurring. The Corrective Action and Preventive Action plan (CAPA) will be used to inform decisions about compliance with regulatory requirements. Where the registered provider fails to meet the statutory requirements an escalation process may be commenced.

The inspectorate reserves the right to edit responses received for reasons including clarity, completeness and compliance with administrative and legal processes.

The contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

### Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, 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) There was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived. Staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available on the premises at all times when the pre-school children were present.

Files for the five staff were reviewed.

(2)(a) & (b) Ten of the ten written validated references, on file for the five staff were from a past employer or from a source other than the past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the five staff.

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

(d) One of the staff had worked outside the jurisdiction, for six months or more, while over the age of 18 years of age and had the required police vetting.

(4) The five staff who were working directly with children, held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), at a Level 5 to 7, in Early Childhood Care and Education. Copies of qualifications were on file for the staff.

### 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) At all times during the period of the inspection, the person in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.
- (3) Documentary evidence in the form of attendance records and staff rosters indicated that adult child ratios were adhered to.
- On the morning of the inspection, there were 19 pre-school children aged between 3 to 5 years. There were two adults directly caring for these children. The person in charge also assisted in the administration part of the inspection.

### 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

- Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snacks without being rushed. The atmosphere during snack time was relaxed, with pleasant social interaction among the children and staff.
- The staff responded to children's individual personalities, sensitivities and needs in relation to toileting.

The children had unrestricted access to the toilet and did not have to wait to use the toilet. Children were allowed to take their time during toileting. Staff encouraged and supported children to become more independent in toileting practices.

It was advised on inspection that two children are in nappies and one child is been toilet trained .Nappy changing was carried out in a sensitive manner.

- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence, and to develop self-help and personal hygiene skills.
- Children had plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.
- The service supported the children in forming and sustaining positive relationships with staff.

For example, by:

- assigning a key person to each child;
- showing respect for each unique child and developing their trust;
- being actively involved in children’s play, where appropriate (initiating games, joining in when invited to by children);
- behaving in a way that creates a positive atmosphere (having frequent social conversations, joint laughter and showing affection);
- listening to the voice of the child as they communicate their needs, thoughts, and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children’s cues, gestures and body language;
- encouraging children to think critically, ask questions and respond to them in a way that promotes sustained shared thinking; nurturing and comforting children;
- using soft tones, the child’s individual name, and getting down to their level and making eye contact.
- Visual aids (picture and word reminders) and instructions were displayed and used with the children to support their learning.
- The atmosphere in the learning environment was encouraging and unhurried.
- The outdoor environment provided children with activities and opportunities for
  - fresh air, and releasing energy (e.g., playing chase)
  - physical exercise and play (e.g., jumping, running),
- The children were supported to be confident about their identity and to have a strong sense of belonging while in the service.

- Children engaged in playing house / shop, matching cards, connecting, at construction, stacking, building, puzzle making, peg play, at dress up and role play, at imaginative play. There was also circle and story time.
- In the outdoor area the children were observed running, climbing on the climbing frame, chasing, and playing with blocks, playing on bikes/trikes and scooters and at sand play.
- On speaking with staff, the inspector was informed that they verbally provided parents and guardians with daily information on their child's experiences in the pre-school including the child's likes, interests and preferences and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection times by text messages, by phone calls, and by email.
- Staff adjusted the level of support provided to children depending on the child's abilities, allowing for children's partial participation and participation with support.
- The staff listened to children in a caring, gentle way when they expressed emotions, and reassured them that it is normal to experience positive and negative emotions at times. The staff acknowledged and accepted children's feelings (positive and negative) and the relationships between children's actions and other's responses.
- The staff supported children to enter social groups, and to learn to help and positively engage with other children. The staff encouraged and praised children for specific, positive, and appropriate behaviours. The children were given choice on what to do next.
- The programme of care was flexible and guided by the children's choices. Children were supported by the staff during periods of individual and group-based activities, the staff sensitively supervised and intervened when necessary.
- The staff were observed helping children to find solutions, supporting them, and talking to the children in a variety of ways, discussing, questioning, modelling, and commentating, extending a child's activities and initiating games and activities.
- The staff provided significant opportunities for the child to decide their play activities and experiences.
- Staff used positive strategies to support children's inclusion. For example, the inspector noted that the staff acknowledged a child's engagement in an activity 'that is great' 'well done' and used open ended questions such as 'what should we do next?', 'is there any other way to do this?', to allow children to critically think and explore.

- The children were given positive alternatives, rather than just being told 'no'. The children were supported in preventing, managing, and resolving conflict. Children could identify, name, and explore their feelings both positive and negative.

### 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 preschool and the external outdoor play area were secured so that children could not leave the area unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the area.
- Fire doors were unobstructed.
- All cleaning agents were stored inaccessible to the children.
- Leads, cables, and flexes were secured and or inaccessible to prevent any trips or strangulation hazard.
- The playroom temperatures were thermostatically controlled, and maintained between 18°C to 22°C.
- Thermostatically controlled warm water not exceeding 43°C to facilitate hand washing was available to facilitate hygienic hand washing.
- Heavy equipment and furnishings were anchored appropriately.
- The playroom windows were high and thereby inaccessible to the children.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- There were no pits or ponds in the designated outdoor area to cause any risk of injury to the pre-school child.
- The staff clearly identified to the early year's inspector, the drop off and collection procedures for children.
- A system was in place to ensure that daily records of attendance were kept for all the children, attending the pre-school.

##### Infection Control:

- The inspector observed that the children washed their hands regularly throughout the inspection to include, prior to consuming snack, after outdoor play and after toileting.
- Suitable hand washing facilities were provided with supplies of liquid soap.
- The playrooms and sanitary accommodations had foot operated lidded bins.
- The pre-school rooms and sanitary areas were well ventilated with the windows open throughout the inspection.
- Tabletops were cleaned immediately prior to children’s snack break.

### Administration of Medication:

- There were no medications administered to the children on the day of the inspection.
- The staff demonstrated knowledge of safe practices with regards to the safe storage and administration of medication should it be required.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. The soft matting surface in the outdoor area was slippery with evidence of moss. This could pose a potential tripping hazard.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### General Safety:

On 18/06/2024 the person in charge submitted a written response to advise:

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

The soft matting has now been power washed and the moss has been removed The soft matting will be power washed on a regular basis to ensure the surface does not become a potential tripping hazard..

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

Photographic evidence was submitted to the office of the early years inspectorate of the power washed soft matting in the outdoor area.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 has 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) The service provided evidence that a person trained in first aid for children was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. Two staff members had current training in first aid for children with an expiry date of 31/01/2026 and 20/02/2026.

2)(a) A first aid box was available in the kitchen stored on a high shelf.

This contained an adequate quantity of first aid items for the numbers of children attending the service at any one time. and was readily available in the event a child required first aid treatment.

## 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.*

*(2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*

*(a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,*

*(b) an employee, and*

*(c) an authorised person.*

*(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) Arrangements were in place to record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated 26<sup>th</sup> of April 2024.
- (b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service was on file, last annual maintenance dated January 2024.
- Records indicated that the last maintenance for the fire and smoke detection system was dated 16<sup>th</sup> of April 2024.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the walls in the playrooms.

### 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 with an expiry date 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2025, which was for a part time service for 22 children which included the following: -public liability insurance, insurance against fire and theft, buildings insurance, and insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.