

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN027				
Name of Service:	Hopes & Dreams Community Playschool				
Address of Service:	Ballyforan, Ballinasloe, Co. Roscommon				
Eircode:	H53 H7D1				
Name of Registered Provider:	Kerry Browne				
Service type:	Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	12/09/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>14</td> <td>PM</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </table>	AM	14	PM	0
AM	14	PM	0		

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon.
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Kennedy
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
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

This community operates early learning and care service in a designated playroom in the community hall, within walking distance of the village of Ballyforan, Co. Roscommon. The service operates an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care and sessional programme from 9.30hrs to 12.30hrs, from Monday to Friday. There is one pre-school playroom with adjacent sanitary areas. There are secure outdoor play areas (including all weather sheltered area) to the rear of the pre-school for children's play and exploration.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work in the service. Four staff are employed in the service. 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 Regulation 9,11,23,25,26 and 28. The inspection may also focus on other regulations 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,*

(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 deputize in the service.

(b) The person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived and remained on site for the duration of the inspection.

Documentary evidence indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.

The four staff files were reviewed.

(2)(a) &(b) Eight of the eight validated written references on file in respect of the four staff, were from a past employer, or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the four staff and the registered provider. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Not applicable as none of the staff had lived outside the jurisdiction, for longer than 6 consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years

(4) The four staff working directly with the children had evidence of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) Level 5 to Level 8, in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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) The person in charge ensured that there were two staff on the premises at all times while the pre-school was operating.

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 entry to the premises and the staff only areas – the community hall, office and adult sanitary area were secure and thereby inaccessible to a pre-school child.
- The external outdoor play area was secure 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

Infection Control:

- 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.
- 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 areas 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.

Administration of Medication:

- Staff advised that currently there was no child on medication. The staff were familiar with the medication administration policy of the service if medication needed to be administered.

Fire Safety:

- All exit routes from the service were free from obstruction during the inspection.

Outings:

- There were no outings on the day of the inspection, however when asked, the staff were aware of the requirements and had a clear understanding of the outings policy and procedure.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

- Children's snacks that were provided from home including perishable food items such as cheese, and yoghurts were observed to be stored in the preschool room with an air temperature recorded at 21.4°C and therefore not kept below 5°C as recommended by the Department of Health and Children. Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-School Service.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection Control:

The registered provider submitted a written response to state they have storage boxes with the children's names and photos to enable them to place their dairy products in the fridge.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the storage boxes in the fridge

Summary Comment

The Early Years inspectorate has assessed the actions taken and evidence submitted and deems it to comply with Regulation 23.

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) Three staff working in the pre-school service had evidence of a current certification of first aid for children.

(2)(a) A suitably equipped first aid box was available and in an easily accessible conspicuous position.

(b) The first aid box was readily available, with content items within date.

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) Arrangements were in place to record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated 11th of June 2025 and it was advised by the person in charge that they intend to do a drill before the end of September when the children are more familiar with their environment.

(b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service was on file, with last annual maintenance dated 18th of December 2024.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in the playroom.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(b) Records indicated that the last maintenance for the fire and smoke detection system was dated January 2024.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider submitted a written response to state the fire alarm has been tested on 22nd of September. It was also advised that a new fire alarm system will be fitted in the service.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence was submitted of the service record of the fire and smoke detection system

Summary Comment

The Early Years inspectorate has assessed the action taken and evidence submitted and deems it to comply with Regulation 26.

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 27th of March 2026, which was for a sessional service for 22 children which included the following: -

- public liability insurance,
- insurance against fire and theft,
- buildings insurance,
- insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.