

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN028				
Name of Service:	Jack and Jill Community Playgroup				
Address of Service:	Main Street, Ballinlough, Co. Roscommon				
Eircode:	F45 K799				
Name of Registered Provider:	Aine Scally				
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional				
Date(s) of Inspection:	08/10/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>23</td> <td>PM</td> <td>19</td> </tr> </table>	AM	23	PM	19
AM	23	PM	19		
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, 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

Jack and Jill community playgroup is in operation since 1996. It is managed by a voluntary management committee. It operates from the local community hall and consists of two playrooms namely Room A and Room B with a separate kitchen and sanitary accommodation for the children and staff.

It provides a part time preschool session from 09:00hrs to 13:45hrs and provides an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care session from 09:00hrs to 12:00hrs five days per week for 38 weeks of the year.

An outdoor play area is provided to the side of the premises.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work directly with the children and has employed a person in charge to operate the service. Six adults including the person in charge work in the service and hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) from level 5 to level 8 in Early Childhood Care and Education. One adult is employed on the access and inclusion model (Aims). A relief staff is available in event of staff absence.

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 Regulations 9,11 ,23,25,26 and 28. 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 deputy 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*
- (c) there is a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee and unpaid worker.*

(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 deputy 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.

(2)(a) &(b) Eight staff files were presented to the early year inspector.

Sixteen of the sixteen written validated references, on file for the eight staff were from a past employer or from a source other than the past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the eight staff, and 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 for that jurisdiction.

(4) Eight staff who were working directly with children, held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), at a Level 5 to 8, in Early Childhood Care and Education. Copies of qualifications were on file for the eight 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.*
- (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.*
- (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 was a designated person in charge and there was a named person available to deputise in the service. On the day of the inspection, the deputy person in charge was on the premises and remained on site for the remainder of the inspection.
- (2) On the morning of the inspection, there were 23 children present between 3-5 years There were five staff directly caring for these children
In the afternoon, of the inspection, there were 19 children present between 3 to 5 years. There were five staff directly caring for 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 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.
- The staff clearly identified to the early year's inspector, the drop off and collection procedures for children.

Infection Control:

- Suitable hand washing facilities were provided with supplies of liquid soap.
- 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.
- 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

- It was advised during the inspection that presently there is no child on medication.
- Through discussion with the inspector, the staff demonstrated that they were aware of the correct procedures for the administration of medicines.

Fire Safety:

- Monthly fire drills were carried out on the premises to ensure the children were familiar with the procedure in event of an emergency.
- All exit routes from the service were free from obstruction during the inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In Preschool Room A, the play cooker and play sink were cracked and could pose a potential safety risk.
2. There were two locks on the sensory board in the outdoor area with evidence of rust and could pose a potential safety risk.

Infection Control:

3. The nappy changing mat was ripped and worn proving difficult to effectively clean.
4. In the sanitary areas, there was evidence of dust and debris on the ceiling mechanical ventilation covers
5. The edges of a child sized couch in Preschool Room B were worn and frayed proving difficult to effectively clean.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

The person in charge submitted a written response to the office of the early years inspectorate to advise

General Safety:

1. The damaged play kitchen has been removed, and a new play kitchen has been provided and staff have been reminded that morning risk assessments will include furniture/equipment checks and will report any damage immediately for prompt replacement.
immediately.
2. The sensory board was removed immediately due to rusted areas and put into storage with the intent of repurposing. The service will use durable, weather-appropriate materials going forward.

Infection Control:

3. The nappy changing mat has been replaced. Changing mats included in daily morning risk assessments and a spare mat will be kept on site to allow for same day replacement.
4. The mechanical ceiling ventilation covers have been vacuumed and cleaned, and the ventilation covers will be included in our biweekly deep clean.
5. The frayed couch has been removed until a new cover has been sourced. Only wipeable materials that allow for effective cleaning will be used going forward. Staff also, reminded to check for wear and tear of materials during morning checks and report any findings immediately.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

The person in charge submitted photographic evidence of

1. The new play kitchen
2. The sensory board removed.

Infection Control:

3. The replaced nappy changing mat.
4. The cleaned ventilation covers
5. The frayed couch removed.

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) Six staff working in the pre-school service had evidence of a current first aid responder qualification, thereby ensuring a person trained was immediately available.

(2)(a) The first aid box was stored in an easily accessible conspicuous position.

(b) The first aid box was readily available.

Non-Compliance Information

(2) The saline sachets were out of date.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2) The person in charge submitted a written response to the office of the early years inspectorate to advise that the saline sachets were removed and disposed of and replaced with newly purchased saline sachets.

and a monthly expiry date checklist has been included in the first aid box to ensure stock will be replaced before expiring.

Supporting documentation submitted

The person in charge submitted photographic evidence of the replaced saline sachets and the checklist included in the first aid box.

Summary Comment

The Early Years inspectorate has assessed the actions taken and evidence submitted and deems it to comply with Regulation 25.

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 30th of September 2025.

(b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service was on file.

Records indicated that the last annual maintenance for the firefighting equipment was dated 15th of October 2024 and the last annual maintenance for the smoke alarms was 3rd of June 2025.

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

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 certification of adequate insurance which had an expiry date 27th of March 2026.

The insurance for 42 pre-school children was for a part time service, included the following:

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