

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2015SO024 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Knock na Shee Pre-School |
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| <b>Address of Service:</b> | Streamstown, Lavagh, Ballymote, Co. Sligo |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------|

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|-----------------|----------|
| <b>Eircode:</b> | F56 WY27 |
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|                                     |             |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Leo Coleman |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| <b>Service type:</b> | Sessional |
|----------------------|-----------|

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| <b>Date of Inspection:</b> | 13/03/2026 |
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|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 11 | PM | No. |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|-----|

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|-------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Early Years Inspectorate,<br>TUSLA Child & Family Agency,<br>Markievicz House,<br>Barrack St,<br>Sligo,<br>F91 XC84 |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | S Killeen                                                                                                           |
| <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). |  |

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| <b>Conditions if applicable</b> | Not applicable |
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# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### Description of service

Knock-na-shee Preschool is a private owned preschool service, operating since 2007. The preschool provides a sessional service for children aged between 2 years and 6 years of age from 9:15am to 12:15pm daily. The premises is situated in a community hall, located in a rural area of Co. Sligo. The service has an outdoor play area located to the rear of the premises where children have access to equipment and resources.

### Staffing

Three adults are employed to work in the service. The person in charge who works directly with the children. One adult is employed under the Access and inclusion model and one relief person available to the person in charge if required. On the day of inspection two adults were present working directly with the preschool children. The register provider does not work directly in the service.

### 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 announced/unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required. The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9,11,19,23 25 and 26; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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

- (1) An Immediate Action Notice (IAN) was issued to the registered provider on 13 March 2026 in relation to regulation 23, general safety. Please see body of report for more detail.
- (2) An Immediate Action Notice (IAN) was issued to the registered provider on 13 March 2026 in relation to regulation 23, general Safety. Please see body of report for more detail.

### 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.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### 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 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*
- (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) The registered provider ensured that.
- (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
  - (b) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.
  - (c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and accountability in the service. This was displayed on the notice board in the main hall accessible to parents when they entered.
- (2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that two new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. Two of these new staff members work directly with the children. A total of two files were

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

reviewed. In addition, Garda vetting for one staff member whose disclosure was identified as due for renewal were requested for review.

The following vetting information was available for two adults:

- (a) Four written validated references from past employers for two of the adults.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for three adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (4) Two of the adult files reviewed, evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

### 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.*

#### Compliance Information

- (1) On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.
- (2) The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times throughout the inspection.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### 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*

*(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.*

#### Compliance Information

(19)(a) (b)

- The playroom was a comfortable inviting space for preschool children. The room was nicely decorated for St Patricks day with posters and the children's art on the walls. The large room was divided into defined interest areas that included. The home corner and shop area which were well resourced with appropriate items to engage children in play and included some authentic shampoo containers milk cartons. Small electric cooker was used to give children the experience of baking/ cooking. The lower part of the room had comfortable rest area for the children, located beside the library. There was a dress up area with a mirror and lots of different costumes. There was also a large space for free play which the children were observed utilising on the day of inspection.
- The sensory area consisted of sand and playdoh trays and there was a separate area for the children to paint and draw. A large blackboard with coloured chalk facilitated children's markings. The transport area consisted of a large variety of transport vehicles large road maps and train tracks. Construction area offered a variety of opportunities for the children to improve their gross and fine motor skills.
- All of the play educational resources were accessible to the children at their height. Appropriate size tables and chairs were located near interest areas to provide children with a choice of tabletop activities or floor play.
- The room features a diverse range of wall displays, including a photo board showcasing children engaged in various activities within the service and a dedicated area for their current artwork. A notable feature is a colourful, display representing the solar system and planets suspended from the roof. Additionally, a large family wall contains numerous photographs of the children with their immediate and extended families;

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

children were observed actively using this space to identify and show each other their older siblings and grandparents.

- The outdoor environment provides a good variety of activities to support children's gross motor development, as well as space to engage in energetic play, imaginative play, and experiences with nature. Interest areas include a construction zone with a variety of trucks, balance beams, and a seating area. There are also outdoor sand pits and raised flower beds.
- The service promoted healthy eating and food, and snacks were provided from home. Children on the day of inspection were observed eating a variety of sandwiches, wraps and crackers with fillings of ham and cheese. A variety of fruit was also provided to include watermelon, strawberries and bananas. Children's drinks were available on a small side table within their reach throughout the session, should they feel thirsty at any stage.
- Aprons were available to the children for messy play activities. Spare clothes were available if the children required a change of clothing during the session.
- Children access the toilet during the session in accordance with their individual needs. Child friendly hand-washing posters were placed in the toilets to promote correct hand washing. Good general hygiene practises were observed, and staff supervise children when they washed their hands to ensure that this was effectively carried out.
- Free movement of the children was facilitated in the daily routine of the service. Short periods of adult initiated activities was interspersed with free play where children could choose their own activity and move between the different interest areas in the room.
- Children were supported and encouraged to be independent suitable to their age and stage of development, when toileting, dressing for home and tidying away after work or play activities.
- Ongoing observations and assessments were documented, which helped create a complete, well-rounded picture of each individual child. These observations informed the planning for the curriculum. The curriculum was observed to be flexible in accordance with the emerging interests of the children, their needs, and preferences short- and long-term goals were displayed throughout the playroom. Individual plans for children who required them were detailed, individual and supportive in their direction. Individual learning journals were maintained for each child and shared with parents on a regular basis.
- The staff present were observed to be consistent and positive in their interactions with the children. Positive behaviour was encouraged as the staff rewarded good behaviour and children's efforts with praise and acknowledgment. Children were alerted well in advance of transition to new activities such as snack, tidy up time and home time.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

- Staff were attentive and caring in their approach and interacted with the children at their level. Staff were observed keeping up the flow of conversation with the children throughout the session. Children were observed being actively listened to and praised and encouragement was offered to each child as they engaged in different activities.
- Good teamwork was observed and staff worked well together communicating at vital times of transition and home-time.
- Children were offered a sense of belonging through the provision of individually named places for their personal belongings and by displays of artwork and photos of each child with their families.
- Children were enabled to engage positively with each other and were encouraged to be helpful, to take turns and share play resources with other children.
- Children's language, development and communication skills were supported through the positive interactions an ongoing conversation observed during the session. This was observed on the day of inspection through storytelling, music and nursery rhymes that formed part of their play routine. The changing themes in the curriculum provided opportunities for the children to increase their vocabulary and expand their language.
- Children were regularly praised and encouraged throughout the day which helped them to be confident and willing to communicate their ideas and to ask questions.
- Staff and parents work in partnership with the service. Staff also advised the inspector that at pick up and drop off they can verbally communicate with parents if necessary.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### 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:

- Toys and play equipment were safe for the age group using them, in good condition, and free from pinch and crush points, exposed bolts or sharp edges.
- Materials were observed to be in a good state of repair.
- The cleaning agents were stored on high shelving or secured cupboards, out of the reach of children.
- The windows were high and out of children's reach.
- Leads and flexes were secure and inaccessible to the preschool children.

##### Infection Control:

- Liquid hand soap and paper hand towels, hygienically dispensed from wall mounted units, were readily available for hygienic hand washing and drying.
- Child friendly handwashing posters were placed beside the sinks. Handwashing was supervised by the adults to ensure all hands were cleaned effectively.
- A refrigerator was available and utilised for the storage of perishable snacks and food.
- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to and after snack-time.
- The materials and resources throughout the service were visibly clean.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Staff demonstrated a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding the safe administration of medication. Although no medication was administered during the inspection, anti-febrile medication was found to be stored securely, out of reach of children, and within its expiry date.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care room.
- Fire extinguishers were on the premises and easily accessible

## Non-Compliance Information

### General Safety:

- (1) An Immediate Action Notice (IAN) was issued to the registered provider on 13 March 2026 in relation to regulation 23 general safety, where two external fire doors were not appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. A written response was received on the 20 March 2026 to the IAN deemed adequate by the inspector. Following the inspection, a referral was made to the Chief Fire Officer in relation to the unsecured exits and the corrective action taken.
- (2) An Immediate Action Notice (IAN) was issued to the registered provider on 13 March 2026 in relation to regulation 23 general safety, in respect of water temperature of 66.3° in the sanitary area and accessible to the preschool children. A written response was received on the 15 March 2026 to the IAN stating that the water temperature was checked daily and within acceptable levels. This was deemed adequate by the inspector.
- (3) In the sanitary area exposed pipes and a water heating system was accessible to the preschool children.

### Infection Control:

- (4) Foot operated pedal bins were not in operation throughout the service This increases the risk of cross infection.
- (5) An accumulation of dust and cobwebs had developed in the sanitary area. Regular cleaning of sanitary areas can reduce the risk of cross contamination.

## Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

- (1) A referral was made to the fire officer, and any recommendations will be put into place.
- (2) Thermostatically controlled water system in place. Water temperatures will be checked daily, and a record will be kept.
- (3) The hot water pipes have been covered, and the water heating system is encased in a box and so no longer accessible to the children - the pipes that are on display are cold water pipes. We will ensure that the above is always maintained and in place.

#### Infection Control:

- (4) The bin has been removed, and the area is no longer in use. This area is no longer in use.
- (5) This area has been cleaned and is no longer in use. This area is no longer in use.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

- (1) No evidence submitted awaiting response from fire officer.
- (2) Photographic evidence of thermos pen taking temperature of water and log of water temperature log submitted.
- (3) Photographic evidence submitted.

#### Infection Control:

- (4) Photographic evidence submitted.
- (5) Photographic evidence submitted.

### 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) Evidence was available to demonstrate that two adults held current first aid responder (FAR) certification, and this adult was rostered to work at the service during the hours of operation.
- (2)
  - (a) There was sufficient first aid equipment supplied in the service which was stored out of reach of the children.
  - (b) The first aid supplies were accessible at all times should they be required.

## 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) A procedure was in place to practice and record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated the 23 January 2026.
  - (b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment was on file in the service. Records indicated that the last annual maintenance for the firefighting equipment was dated May 2025.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) was available and open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (4) On the day of inspection, a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire were observed to be displayed in a conspicuous place within the premises.

### Non-Compliance Information

- (1) (b) There was no record on site to indicate type and maintenance of smoke alarms. Annual maintenance of smoke alarm system is required.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

- (1) The smoke alarm system has been serviced and evidence is attached. We will ensure that an annual service will take place annually in the future

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

(1) Fire Cert and updated fire policy submitted.

### **Summary Comment**

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 26 has been adequately addressed.

## Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

### **Regulation 29 - Premises**

*A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-*  
*(c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*

### **Non-Compliance Information**

(1) The inspector observed evidence of a black substance in the sanitary area which posed potential health risks to children in attendance.

### **Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider**

#### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

This area has been cleaned and painted. We will ensure to keep on top of cleaning and painting and include this area on our toilet checklist.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

Photographic evidence and copy of toilet cleaning sheet.

### **Summary Comment**

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non compliance identified under Regulation 29 has been adequately addressed.