

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015TY097		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Cashel Pre-School Playgroup		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Rock House, St Patrick's Rock, Cashel, Co Tipperary		
<b>Eircode:</b>	E25 NY74		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Felicity Thompson		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	29/09/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	19	PM N/A
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	13 Market Square, Mallow, Co Cork P51DD5Y		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	B Fraher		
<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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
---------------------------------	-----

### Description of service

This privately owned service is operated from a premises outside Cashel in county Tipperary. The service consists of two early years rooms, children and staff toilets, and an enclosed outdoor play area. A sessional Early Years Care and Education (ECCE) programme is offered to children 2 years 8 months to 6 years of age. The service is open from 9.00am to 12.00pm daily, Monday to Friday for 38 weeks per year.

### Staffing

There were two staff on the premises on the day of inspection including the proposed registered provider who works 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/ health, welfare and development of child and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulation 9 management and recruitment, Regulation 11 staffing levels, Regulation 15 records of a pre-school service, Regulation 19 health, welfare and development of child, Regulation 23 safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child, Regulation 24 checking in and out and records of attendance, Regulation 25 first aid, Regulation 26 Fire safety measurements and Regulation 28 insurance; however, on inspection an additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified

under Regulation 8 Notification of change in circumstances. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation 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

On the day of inspection, an Immediate Action Notice was issued as one staff member working with the children did not have a Garda vetting disclosure available for review. This posed a risk to the children.

On 29 September 2025, the proposed registered provider outlined the steps taken to mitigate the risk. Further information can be found under Regulation 9 of this report.

On 20 September 2025, the inspector made a referral to the Fire Safety Officer in relation to the premises.

## Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the children, proposed registered provider and staff who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Part II - Registration and Register

#### Regulation 8 - Notification of change in circumstances

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a temporary pre-school service shall, subject to paragraph (3), notify the Agency in writing of any proposed change in the details in relation to the pre-school service contained in the register pursuant to section 58C(2) of the Act or Regulation 7(2) at least 60 days before it is proposed that the change would take effect.*

#### Non-Compliance Information

(1) The former registered provider had not notified the agency of the change to the registered provider, the person in charge and the age range of the children attending the service. The service is registered to cater for 3 to 6 year olds and was catering for 2 to 6 year olds on the day of inspection.

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

The following statement was received from the proposed registered provider:

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

A change in circumstances has been submitted, which cannot be processed until the proposed registered provider's Garda vetting is completed. This is currently in process. A regulatory compliance log has been introduced into the service.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Proof of email of change in circumstances application.

#### Summary Comment

Evidence of an application for the change in circumstances was reviewed, and the change has now been completed. The noncompliance in relation to Regulation 8(1) has been addressed.

### 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) The proposed registered provider was the person in charge and there was a named deputy in the service that could deputise as required.
  - (b) The proposed registered provider and the deputy were on duty at the service when the inspector arrived. The staff roster indicated that either the person in charge or the deputy were on duty at all times during the hours of operation.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to two staff who were employed in the service including the proposed registered provider were the subject of inspection.
- (a) Of the four required references, three were from previous employers with required records of validation on file.
  - (b) Of the four required references, one was from another source other than a previous employer with required records of validation on file.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures was obtained and was on file for one staff member. The proposed registered provider was aware of the re-vetting timeframes outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda Vetting every three years.
  - (d) Police vetting was required for one of the staff as they lived outside of the state for longer than six consecutive months.

(4) Both of the two staff who worked directly with the children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 7 to level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Minister.

### Non-Compliance Information

(c) On the day of inspection, an Immediate Action Notice was issued as one staff member working with the children did not have a Garda vetting disclosure available for review. This posed a risk to the children.

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

The following statement was received from the proposed registered provider:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The vetting application for the staff member is in process and the staff member is removed from direct contact with the children. Staff files have been audited and the services recruitment and vetting policy have been updated.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of an employee checklist has been received.

### Summary Comment

The Garda vetting for one staff member has been received in the office of the inspectorate. This has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation (9) (c).

## 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 the time of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance at the times.

(3) The adult to child ratio were observed to meet the minimum requirement over the duration of the inspection.

The ratio was as follows:

- The Free play room had 10 children being cared for by 1 adult in the morning.
- The Work room had nine children being cared for by one adult in the morning.

### Part IV – Information and Records

#### Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

*(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:*

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

### Compliance Information

(1) (a-i) Twenty children were registered to attend the service. A sample of 10 children's records were assessed and reviewed. The records were found to contain all the required information.

### 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

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the staff and examination of the relevant documents.

#### Basic needs:

- All meals and snacks, which had been prepared by the parents were observed to be healthy and nutritious. Children were observed to eat snacks of fruit, yogurt, raisins, rice cakes and crackers. An alternative choice was available if required.
- Appropriate seating was used in the form of low-level tables and chairs.
- Drinking water was readily available in both care rooms throughout the day.
- Children using the sanitary facilities were observed to do so independently with the supervision of the staff.
- Children's independence was promoted by staff in all the care rooms. For example, children putting on their own coats.
- Outdoor games and activities were promoted and observed at the time of inspection, with both care rooms accessing the outdoor area together on the day. Staff were observed to assist children with passing a ball, using chalk and on the slides.

#### Supporting relationships:

- During snack time, the staff sat with the children in a relaxed environment, affording sufficient time for children to enjoy their food. Staff discussed topics of interest with the children during mealtimes.
- Throughout the morning, staff in both care rooms were heard engaging in social conversation with the children, which helped to promote a relaxed and happy atmosphere.
- Interactions between staff and children in the care rooms was observed to be warm and sensitive. Examples included staff members communicating positively with children in soft and gentle tones, offering reassurance by sitting near children and lowering to their level.

- Staff were seen to read to the children, and assist when needed when painting, playing with modelling dough and building puzzles which supported positive relationships with the children and language development.
- Various methods of communication were used to link with parents and guardians such as messaging through text message, email and communication at collection and drop off.
- Staff were observed intervening in minor issues between children when playing with the train set, encouraging them to take turns.

### 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:

- When the inspectors arrived, the entrance door to the premises was secure. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and reduced the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- The toys and play equipment assessed were in good condition.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The care room windows inspected were adequately secured to ensure a child could not exit.

##### Infection control:

- Hand washing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels. Children were observed to wash their hand before meals and after outdoor play.
- Lidded pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste in the sanitary areas and care rooms.
- Children's bags were stored off the ground.
- A refrigerator was available in the Work room for the storage of perishable foods.

##### Fire safety:

- All fire extinguishers observed were wall mounted.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### Fire safety:

The locking mechanism on the labelled fire exit doors was identified as posing a potential safety risk and a referral was made to the fire officer.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was made by the proposed registered provider:

#### **Corrective & Preventive Action**

The locking mechanism has been changed. The service has introduced a safety inspection and annual fire safety audit.

#### **Supporting documentation submitted**

A photograph of the locks changed on the door were received in the office of inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the proposed registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 23.

## 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-*

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

### Compliance Information

(1) The attendance sheet was available in which the inspector observed that all of the children present on the day had their check in and out times completed for the duration of the inspection.

(3)

(b) A daily record of visitors to the premises was kept on signed pages in a folder. The inspectors were requested to signed in and out from the service.

### 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 one adult held current first aid responder (FAR) certification and 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-*

*(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) The inspector was provided with a list of monthly fire drills which were recorded in writing. The most recent fire drill undertaken was dated 17 September 2025.
- (b) The certification for servicing of the firefighting equipment was dated 1 September 2025.
- (2)

(c) All available records were furnished to the inspector on request.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed at the entrance door to the service.

### Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(b) There was no record of the annual maintenance of the smoke alarms available for review in the premises. This poses a risk to the safety of children attending the service in the event of fire. This was also unavailable at the last inspection on 11 October 2022.

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

The following statement was made by the proposed registered provider:

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

The smoke alarm system has been serviced and tested. This will be completed annually.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the fire detection and alarm system servicing and testing has been received in the office of the inspectorate.

### Summary Comment

The corrective action submitted by the proposed registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 26.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

The insurance certificate indicated that sufficient cover was in place for the provision of a sessional service and the policy was valid until the 27 March 2026.