

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015TY119
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Name of Service:	Kilcash Pre-School
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Address of Service:	Kilcash N.S., Kilcash, Clonmel, Co Tipperary
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Eircode:	E91 VX56
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Name of Registered Provider:	Marion O'Neill
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	20/01/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	14	PM	No.
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	13 Market Square Mallow Cork P51DD5Y
Inspection undertaken by:	B Fraher
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	N/A
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Description of service

Kilcash Pre-school is a community service located in a detached building in the grounds of Kilcash national school. This sessional service operates from 9:00 to 12:30, Monday to Friday 38 weeks of the year and accommodates children 2 to 6 years of age. The building consists of one classroom, two toilets, a storage room and an entrance area. There is a kitchenette within the classroom. The service has access to an outdoor play space on the grounds of the national school.

Staffing

The service currently employs three staff, one who is relief cover and a total of two staff were working directly with the children on the day of inspection. The registered provider is not service based.

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/ premises and facilities. 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 16: Records of a Preschool Service, Regulation 19: Health, welfare and development of a preschool child, Regulation 23: Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child, Regulation 24: Checking in and out and records of attendance, Regulation 25: First aid and Regulation 26: Fire safety measures,

however on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29: Premises. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations 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.

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the children, person in charge and staff 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) The service had a designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a named deputy in the service that could deputise as required.
 - (b) The person in charge 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.
 - (c) There was clear evidence on inspection of the management structure in place and the specific roles of each staff member. This was on display on the wall.
- (2) The recruitment records in relation to four adults, three of whom were employed in the service and working directly with the children and the registered provider were the subject of inspection.
- (a) Of the eight required references, four were from previous employers with required records of validation on file.
 - (b) Of the eight required references, four were from another source other than a previous employer with a record of validation on file.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained and were on file for each of the four adults. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) No staff member had lived outside the state for over six months as an adult; therefore no police vetting was required.

(4) Records demonstrated that the three adults had achieved a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 to level 8 as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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 were the adequate number of adults required, responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children in attendance at all times.

(3) The service maintained the minimum ratio required as per regulation in the care room. The 14 children attending the service were supervised directly by 2 adults.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to pre-school service

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a record in writing is kept of the following information in relation to the service:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (a) The name, position, qualifications and experience of the designated person in charge, deputy and staff were available in the staff recruitment files.
- (j) The person in charge informed the inspector that no child in the service was currently prescribed medication. An administration record was available to use if medication administration was required.
- (k) There were no records of accidents and incidents recorded in the book. In conversation, the person in charge stated no accidents or incidents had taken place in the service.

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

Basic needs:

- All snacks, which had been prepared by the parents were observed to be healthy and nutritious. Children were observed to eat fruit, yogurt, sandwiches, rice cakes and crackers.
- Appropriate seating was used in the form of low-level tables and chairs.
- Drinking water was readily available to the children 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 throughout the morning. Examples included children selecting a job for the day and putting on their own coats.
- Outdoor play was promoted and observed at the time of inspection, with children entering the school maze to play together which had a climbing activity in the centre. Children also had access to a grass area and a number of play houses outdoors.
- A rest area was available for the children with books to read stored in this area also.

Supporting relationships:

- Throughout the morning, staff were heard engaging in social conversation with the children which helped promote a relaxed and happy atmosphere.
- Interactions between the staff and children was observed to be warm and sensitive. Examples included when children were encouraged to complete artwork and during water and sand play.
- The person in charge informed the inspector that parents and guardians were communicated with via email, phone messages, at drop off and collection.
- Children appeared to be familiar with the routine of the service and supported each other to tidy up which promoted a sense of responsibility.
- Family and community pictures were evident on the wall, promoting a sense of belonging for the children.
- As the children drew and completed puzzles, staff were observed to provide praise and encouragement for their accomplishments.
- One staff member was observed to read 'Colour Monsters' to the children discussing feelings and emotions.
- An individual learning journal was available for each child which contained work completed by each child in relation to themes and activities carried out in the service. This was sent home to parents and guardians to review.
- Staff engaged with the children in both group and individual activities by getting down to their level and maintaining eye contact while discussing and helping children with their chosen task. This was observed on numerous occasions for example with staff having pretend coffee served by the children, assisting with cutting, gluing, discussing swimming and playing with moulding dough.
- A child was observed to be comforted by staff and other children when getting upset outdoors.

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 was secured appropriately. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and prevented the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- The windows in the care rooms were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The toys and play equipment assessed were in good condition.
- The first aid box was stored out of reach of the children.

Infection control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels.
- Children were observed to wash their hands before meals and after using the sanitary facilities.
- Lidded pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste in the sanitary area and the care room.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground on hooks and shelves.
- A refrigerator was available in the care room for the storage of perishable foods.
- Staff were observed sanitising the tables before and after the serving of food.

Fire safety:

- The fire exit doors were free from obstruction on inspection.
- Fire extinguishers were wall mounted.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection control:

On the day of inspection, the staff toilet was observed to be used as a storage area for a television. This posed an infection control risk. This was found on the previous inspection on 26 September 2023 and the corrective action stated that the manager would ensure that no material is stored in the toilet cubicles, however this remains an issue.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

Corrective & Preventive Action

Infection control:

The television has now been removed. All staff are now aware of the infection control risk and toilets will no longer be used for storage.

Supporting documentation submitted

Infection control:

Photographic evidence received.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was deemed to meet regulatory compliance 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 book was available and the inspector observed that all the children present on the day had their check in and out times completed.

(3)

(b) A daily record of visitors to the premises was maintained. The inspector was signed in and out on a record sheet.

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)

Up to date records of First Aid Response (FAR) certification were in place for two of the adults working in the service.

(2)

(a) There was one sufficiently stocked first aid box available in the service and an eye wash box which was safely stored out of reach of children.

(b) The first aid supplies were always accessible, 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)

(b) Written records were available of the servicing of the firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms. The firefighting certificate was dated 30 January 2025, and the smoke alarm certificate was dated 27 May 2025.

(2)

(c) The records referred to in paragraph (1) were available on the premises for review by the inspector.

(4) The fire procedures were displayed on the wall beside the fire door.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)

(a) Fire drills were not practiced and recorded on a monthly basis. Records showed that the last fire drill was completed on 6 October 2025. This posed a safety risk to both staff and children in the event of an emergency.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

A fire drill has been completed. Fire drill responsibility has been assigned to a senior member of staff.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the fire drill record was received in the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

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

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-
(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.

Non-Compliance Information

On the day of inspection 14 children were observed to use 1 toilet and 1 sink available for the children. From review of the roster, it was observed by the inspector that a maximum number of 17 children attended on a daily basis. The person in charge informed the inspector that all the children enrolled in the service use the one toilet

facility as the second toilet in the service was used as a staff toilet. The service requires 1 toilet and 1 sink for every 11 children and 1 toilet and 1 sink for up to 8 adults.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was received from the registered provider:

Corrective and Preventive Action

Both bathrooms have now been assigned to children only. Staff now have access to use the school bathroom if required.

Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence received.

Summary Comment

The action taken by the registered provider has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 29.