

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WH028
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Name of Service:	Clonbrusk Childcare Centre
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Address of Service:	Clonbrusk Childcare Centre, Coosan Road, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
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Eircode:	N37 CIK2
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Name of Registered Provider:	Cyril Dully
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	25/05/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	59	PM	50
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, SAP Office, St. Loman's Campus, Mullingar, Co Westmeath.
Inspection undertaken by:	C. O' Connor Hughes & K. Murphy
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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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Description of service

This full day care community service operates on a Monday to Friday basis and is part of a multiple operated by Athlone Community Services Council CLG. The service participates in the Early Childcare Care and Education (ECCE) programme. The Early Years' Service is located in a single storey purpose-built premises. A wobbler room, toddler room, junior pre-school room, senior pre-school room, two sleep rooms, a staff room, a kitchen, office and reception facilities are provided. An outdoor play area is attached to the rear of the premises. On site set down and parking facilities are available. The service is located on the outskirts of the town of Athlone, County Westmeath.

Staffing

The service employs twenty-three adults. There were fifteen adults working with children in the service on the 25 May 2026. The designated person in charge, deputy, administrator, cook and a student were also present. The registered provider does not work in the service. The person in charge attended the closing meeting.

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.

Regulation 8- Change in Circumstance

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Regulation 9- Management and recruitment - (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (4)

Regulation 11 -Staffing levels - (1) (2) (8)(a)

Regulation 19- Health, welfare and development of child - (1)(a)(b)

Regulation 20 – Facilities for Rest and play

Regulation 21- Equipment and Materials

Regulation 22- Food and Drink

Regulation 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25- First aid - (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26- Fire Safety Measures (1)(a)(b) (4)

Regulation 28 – Insurance

Regulation 32 – Complaints

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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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.

Compliance Information

(1)
A change in circumstance in respect of a change to a new registered provider, change in the telephone number of the registered provider and a change in the email address was submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate. This change was approved by the Tusla registration office on the 18 September 2024.

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.*

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(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 person in charge and deputy were available in the service.

(b)

The person in charge was present for the duration of the inspection.

Twenty-four staff files including the file of the registered provider and a student were reviewed and the following was noted:

(2)(a)(b)

The required number of written validated references were available from past employers or from a source other than a previous employer in respect of the twenty-four files reviewed.

(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the twenty-four files reviewed. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was available in respect of three adults who had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)

Staff members working directly with children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at levels 5 to 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a letter of eligibility to practice.

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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.

(8) Without prejudice to paragraphs (2) to (7)-

(a) a registered provider of a pre-school service other than a child-minding service or a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that there are at least 2 adults on the premises at all times,

Compliance Information

(1)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.

(2)

There were fifty-nine children attending the service supervised directly by sixteen adults in the morning.
There were fifty children present in the afternoon supervised by thirteen adults.

(8)(a)

The staff roster reviewed indicated that two adults are on the premises during the hours of operation.

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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
- (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

(1)(a)(b)

Children were happily engaged in play activities in the outdoor play area moving from one experience to the next supported by the adults. Children wore appropriate clothing including sunhats for the hot weather. Suncream was applied to protect the children's skin. Children were encouraged to drink water regularly.

Children enjoyed the freedom of movement in the indoor and outdoor environments. Older children enjoyed spending time in the local community garden on the grounds of the service. Younger children enjoyed singing songs, story time, various creative and free play activities. Children had the opportunity to choose what activity they wished to participate in.

Children were encouraged to be independent and to feed themselves. Staff assisted children as needed during mealtimes. Younger children were prepared for sleep time by staff and they slept in a quiet restful atmosphere in the wobbler sleep room. Children had their nappies changed on a regular basis and as required. Children who were toilet training were supported by staff. Personal care needs were attended to in a caring manner. Staff supervised children as they brought them to the toilet from the outdoor play area.

Children were happy and content with their carers. Good communication was observed between staff and children as the staff used individual names, maintained eye contact and conversed with the children during play activities, nappy changing, toileting and mealtimes. Positive praise was given to children on the completion of activities. Good teamwork was noted amongst staff.

A range of developmentally appropriate, challenging, creative and enriching experiences were available for all children. Group activities held during the year were displayed in the corridors that included "World Bee Day" and "Welcome to the Bear Hunt". Evidence of the early childhood curriculum was noted.

Partnership with parents was demonstrated in the following ways: The child's daily routine including feeding, nappy changing and sleep patterns in the wobbler and toddler room is shared with parents via an electronic

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handheld tablet by the staff. Parents of older children have the same access to the two-way communication for updates and information for older children. Staff stated a verbal handover is given to parents at collection time. The child's learning journal depicting the child's play and work activities is shared with parents during and at the end of the pre-school term. Staff stated parents have the opportunity to review the journals and give written feedback if they wish to do so. Staff stated graduation day for the senior pre-school children will take place on the 18 June 2026. Staff stated children were invited to and enjoyed the recent disability awareness day in the community garden.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and

(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises,

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Adequate and suitable play equipment was provided for the indoor and outdoor environments.

(b)

Two separate sleep rooms were provided for the children to sleep and rest. The wobbler sleep room was equipped with six cots. Correct bed linen was available for each cot. A comfortable adult chair was available in the sleep room. Seventeen sleep beds were provided for the individual children attending the toddler room.

Cosy rest areas and soft furnishings were provided for children in the four pre-school rooms.

(3)(a)

Children had access to the outdoor play area from their pre-school rooms. The outdoor play area was safe and secure with walls and fencing along the perimeter. Younger children were separated from older children at outdoor play.

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Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

A variety of suitable play materials and equipment was available to support children in various types of creative, manipulative, sensory, imaginary and free play in the indoor environment in the service.

Age and stage appropriate toys and materials were accessible to children on low level open shelving.

In the indoor environment, interest areas included home corners, construction areas, arts and crafts, sensory trays and dress up.

In the outdoor environment, toys and equipment included, water play, sand play, slides, climbing frame, footballs, a basketball hoop, tricycles and bicycles.

Equipment was well maintained, durable and easy to clean. The tables and chairs were child sized suitable to each child's age and development. Personal belongings and bags were stored individually for each child.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service provides the breakfast and the main meal to children attending on a full day care basis. Parents provide the morning and afternoon snacks for the children attending. A weekly menu was available for review.

Children enjoyed their main meal of spaghetti bolognaise with vegetables, pasta and garlic bread presented by the cook in the service. Mashed potato was offered as a choice to the younger children instead of pasta. Children who requested extra helpings of dinner were provided with same by the cook. Alternative food options including vegetarian meals were provided to children as requested. Milk and water were offered to children.

A water station was located in the pre-school rooms for children to serve themselves as required.

A refrigerator was available for the storage of perishable food in the main kitchen and in the pre-school rooms.

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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 main entrance to the service was secure. Access to the service is via a staff operated reception area.

The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents. Safety checklists were available and reviewed.

The inspectors signed the visitors book on arrival.

Infection Control:

The premises was visually clean. Cleaning schedules were available for review. Warm water, paper hand towel and liquid soap was available in the sanitary accommodation. Children were observed to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. Soothers were stored correctly in individual containers in the wobbler room.

The nappy changing practice observed was carried out as per the service nappy changing procedure. Respiratory etiquette was observed as staff cleaned children's noses and used hand sanitiser after wiping.

Administration of Medication:

Temperature reducing medication was available if a child presented with a high temperature.

Medication was stored safely and inaccessible to children.

Health care plans were in place for children with a defined medical condition attending the service.

Documentation reviewed indicated correct administration of medication procedures were in place in the service.

Safe Sleep:

Air conditioning units were in place in the wobbler and toddler sleep rooms.

The wobbler sleep room temperature was recorded at 16 degrees Celsius by the service's own thermometer.

The toddler sleep room temperature was recorded at 17 degrees Celsius by the service's own thermometer.

An electronic sleep record noted the child's colour, breathing and position was available in the service which indicated that sleeping children were checked every ten minutes.

Fire Safety:

The fire emergency exits were free from obstruction in the premises. A fire assembly point was noted to the side of the premises.

Outing.

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Staff stated that the service does not undertake outings.

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)

Eighteen adults were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)

A first aid box was located in the front reception of the service.

(b)

A first aid box was accessible to adults caring for children in the service.

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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)

A written record for the completed monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 29 April 2026.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment and the smoke alarms in the premises were serviced in December 2025 and March 2026 respectively.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in a conspicuous position in the service.

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 current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date noted was 28 February 2027.

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Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

- (1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-
- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,
 - (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and
 - (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.
- (2) A registered provider shall ensure that-
- (a) a record in writing is kept of a complaint made to the provider in respect of the pre-school service, and
 - (b) the complaint is duly dealt with in accordance with the provider's complaints policy.
- (3) A record in writing referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall-
- (a) include the nature of the complaint and the manner in which the complaint was dealt with, and
 - (b) be open to inspection on the premises by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

- (1)
The service complaints policy was available and reviewed. The relevant details in respect of (a)(b)(c) were noted in the policy.
- (2)(a)(b)
Records indicate that the service held information in respect of (a) and (b).
- (3)(a)(b)
The records were available for review by the Inspector.