

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015WX024		
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Caroline's Playschool		
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Churchlands East, Mayglass, Drinagh, Co. Wexford		
<b>Eircode:</b>	Y35 YP58		
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Caroline Kells		
<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional		
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	06/02/2025		
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	3	PM NA
<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspector Tusla Child and Family Agency Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford		
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	C. Ryan		
<b>Title:</b>	Early Years Inspector		
<b>Authority to Inspect</b>			
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>	Not applicable		

### Description of service

Caroline's Playschool is a registered sessional service offering a play based and Montessori programme. It is located in a rural setting in south Wexford. The service operates from 09:30 to 12:30 and can accommodate up to 11 children aged 2 years 6 months to 5 years.

### Staffing

The service operates as a single-handed provider. There is a second adult available to work as a relief staff member and an additional adult available to attend the service to assist with the children in the event of an emergency. The registered provider who works directly with the children attending the service holds qualifications above the minimum QQI Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework.

### 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 9 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4),

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),

Regulation 20 Facilities for rest and play,

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials,

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,  
Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),  
Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a) (b) (4) and  
Regulation 28 Insurance.

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 registered provider and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Part III – Management and Staff

#### Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and

(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 registered provider was the designated person in charge and operated as a single-handed provider. A second named adult was available to work in the service as needed as a second staff member. There was a third person available to attend in the event of an emergency.

(b)

The registered provider was person in charge and confirmed they are present while the service is open.

(2)

Documentation was reviewed in respect of the three adults. This documentation met regulatory requirements as follows:

(a)(b)

Two validated references were available on file for all staff members.

- (c)  
Garda vetting disclosures were available on file for all staff members. The service demonstrated partial compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every 3 years in all cases. See regulation 23.
- (d)  
Police vetting disclosures were not required as there was no evidence that any staff member had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months.
- (4)  
Certificates of qualification for all two staff members who work directly with children were available on file demonstrating that they held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Qualification Framework or qualification deemed by the minister to be equivalent.

## 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)(3)  
On the day of inspection, it was observed that there were adequate staffing levels to respond to the needs of the children present. The registered provider and 3 children aged 3 to 5 years were present for the morning.

### 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.

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

All of the children in the service attend for 3 hours in the morning and during their time on the day of inspection the children had access to both indoor and outdoor spaces for play.

The service consists of one playroom, an entrance hall and toilet. The entrance hall had storage for the children's belongings such as coats, boots and bags. The playroom was bright and warm with sufficient space for the number of children attending.

Children had access to garden and play area located to the side of the premises. This was well resourced with a variety of toys for the children to use. The area consisted of a large lawn and concreted area. The outdoor space was fully enclosed. There was a slide, sand-tray, kitchen, chalk boards, ride on toys, boxes of toys and storage. The children enjoyed daily outdoor play.

(b)

The room had two small sofas that were used by the children daily. They had soft cushions and blankets. The children could rest and relax on the sofa as and when they want.

## 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

The playroom was bright and warm with natural light from the large windows and patio door. The interest areas were well-resourced and easily accessed by the children in the room. The registered provider described how the areas of interest change with the children's current interests. For example, on the day of inspection children had made a tent with the sofa and blankets and enjoyed playing in it for most of the morning.

The toys, materials and equipment were of good quality and there were sufficient quantities available. These included dress up material, a construction area, home corner and kitchen, art and craft materials, a dolls house, and farm toys reflecting the rural area where the service was located. Throughout the room children's artwork was displayed and a family photo wall was located down low for children to look at.

## 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 leading into the service was appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the premises. The storage facilities for hazardous cleaning materials were inaccessible to children.

##### Infection Control:

Warm water, liquid soap, and paper towels were available to facilitate hygienic handwashing for the registered provider and children.

Lunch boxes that included perishable food items were stored in the fridges in the care rooms in line with safe food guidance. Good hand washing practices were observed after toileting and before eating.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. The service did not demonstrate compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every 3 years. There were Garda vetting disclosures available for three persons, however two of these vetting disclosures were not dated within the previous 3 years in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda vetting.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### General Safety:

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

The registered provider provided the following response: Garda vetting has been applied for and pending return of disclosure.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photograph of application for renewing garda vetting.

### Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted a response that was satisfactory to meet the requirements of the regulation.

## 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)

The registered provider held the appropriate First Aid Responder (FAR) certification, ensuring that a person trained in first aid was immediately available to the children at all times.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position and was available for use.

## 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)

Records were available demonstrating that fire drills take place monthly. The last recorded fire drill was documented as having been carried out on 8 January 2025.

(4)

Fire evacuation procedures were displayed in conspicuous places throughout the service

#### Non-Compliance Information

(b)

Records reviewed on the day of inspection indicated that the fire detection system and fire extinguishers were not serviced yearly.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider submitted the following response: a company has been contacted and a callout for service is booked. Future scheduling will be organised.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Email confirmation forwarded on from the company with booking date for annual service.

#### Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted a response that was satisfactory to meet the requirements of the regulation.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

An insurance certificate was available to demonstrate that insurance was in place.