

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WX028		
Name of Service:	Clearestown Community Playschool		
Address of Service:	Clearestown Community Centre, St. Annes, Clearestown, Co. Wexford		
Eircode:	Y35 VE2C		
Name of Registered Provider:	Michelle Roche		
Service type:	Sessional		
Date of Inspection:	26/06/2025		
No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM NA
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspector Tusla Child and Family Agency Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford		
Inspection undertaken by:	C. Ryan		
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	Not applicable		

Description of service

Cleariestown Community Playschool is a community-based playgroup which is managed by a voluntary committee. The service operates from 09:30 to 12:30 and offers a play-based service to children 2 years 10 months to 6 years of age. The service operates from a purpose-built playroom within the local community hall and consists of an entrance lobby, one large playroom, a kitchenette and sanitary accommodation. Children have access to a large secured outdoor play area designated for the early years children.

Staffing

There are three staff employed to work in the service including the registered provider. The registered provider was the designated person in charge and worked directly with the children. The staff working directly with children in the service held the minimum Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at level 5, 6 and 8 qualifications in Childcare and Early Childhood Care and Education 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, staff 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)(b)

The registered provider was the designated person in charge and was on the premises for the duration of the inspection. There was a second named staff available to deputise as required.

The staff files for three staff working in the service were reviewed on the day.

(2)(a)(b)

There were validated references for all employees kept in each staff member's file.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures were available for all staff working in the service. The service demonstrated partial compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to re-new Garda vetting every 3 years. (See Regulation 23).

(d)

Police vetting disclosures were not required as none of the staff had lived outside of the state for a period of longer than six months as an adult.

(4)

Certificates of qualifications for all staff members working directly with the preschool children were available on file.

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)

There was an adequate number of staff working with the children for the duration of the inspection.
During the morning, there were 18 children being directly cared for by 3 staff.

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)

The service consisted of one playroom with its own designated toilets. The room was bright, warm and spacious. The room and play equipment were of good quality and suitable for the age and stage of the children using it. The wide variety of materials supported different types of play offering various levels of challenges to children. Children were excited to spend time in the outdoor area before and after their mid-morning snack. The area was large, with a variety of areas which included a picnic area, a playground with a soft surface, climbing frames and a grass area with trees that provided natural shelter. The service also had use of the community tennis court. The outdoor areas were fully enclosed, giving children space and freedom to run, explore and play. On wet days, the children availed of the large indoor community hall.

(b)

The playroom had a cosy area with soft mats and cushions set up if a child required a rest, relax or not partake in an activity.

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 children were engaged in free play on the inspectors arrival to the service. The room was equipped with low shelving and labelled clear boxes of toys which were easily accessible to the children. The tables and chairs were suitable to the ages of the children using them.

Throughout the room the interest areas were well-resourced and thought out and included a home corner, a shop, dress up clothes and dressing table, writing station, farm toys, construction toys, sand pit, and reading books.

The service had a lending library of books set up in the entrance lobby that children could freely borrow books from. Throughout the room children's artwork was displayed along with photographs of their families, birthday walls, pictures of the local community and their daily routine. During the morning children were engaged in cutting and gluing paper, colouring, building with bricks and having fun on the mini trampoline. The patio door at the rear of the room gave the children direct access to the outdoor area.

There was sufficient space within the room, allowing the children to have unrestricted movement around the room. Children's drinks were located on a small stand, so children easily access a drink as they wanted.

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.

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 on file for all staff members, however the vetting disclosures for 3 staff members 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. It is acknowledged that the registered provider had begun the process of renewing the vetting for the three staff and showed the inspector the date of the application for renewal.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider submitted details of the Garda vetting applications for the three staff.

Going forward the registered provider will ensure that Garda vetting is renewed before the expiry dates on the disclosures.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence submitted to verify Garda vetting disclosures are in place.

Summary Comment

The registered provider submitted a response and evidence that was satisfactory to meet the requirements of the regulations.

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)

There were three staff trained in FAR and first aid for children available to the children attending the preschool service.

(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)

There was written evidence available to demonstrate that monthly fire drills were completed in the service. The last recorded fire drill was carried out on 8 May 2025.

(1)(b)

A record was maintained when the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm system were serviced in December 2025.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire 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

The registered provider had a valid certificate of insurance for a sessional service for 22 children.