

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>F7TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2021DL001
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Kids Cove Creevy
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	1 Ballymacaward, Creevy, Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal
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<b>Eircode:</b>	F94 K859
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Amanda Finnerty
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	21/01/2026
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	18	PM	3
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, TUSLA Child & Family Agency, Markievicz House, Barrack St, Sligo, F91 XC84
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S Killeen
<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>	Not Applicable.
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### Description of service

Kids Cove Creevy is a privately owned and operated outdoor based pre-school service situated in the townland of Creevy, a few kilometres outside the town of Ballyshannon, County Donegal. Children are cared for in a spacious outdoor area at the front of the registered providers residence and with direct access from a parking area. A polytunnel provides both an additional sheltered play area and storage for children's bags, clothing, portfolios and take-home creative work. Children's sanitary accommodation is located in a separate building close to the outdoor play area. Children have access to a playroom also located in this building. A staff area and sanitary accommodation is provided at the rear of the residence. Children are cared for between the ages of 2 and 6 years. A sessional service is provided between 9.30am and 12.30pm. Children can avail of part-time childcare between 9.00am and 2.00pm. A school age service is provided between the hours of 2.00 and 6.00pm.

### Staffing

The service is staffed by five adults who work directly with the children. The registered provider does not work with the preschool children on a daily basis.

### 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 regulations 9,11,16 l, j, k,22,23,25,26,27 and 28, These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16 i, j, k.

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, deputy person in charge, 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*
  - (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) The registered provider ensured that.
- (a) There was a designated person in charge and a named adult to deputise in their absence.
  - (b) The designated deputy person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.

- (c) There was a clear management structure in the service that identifies the lines of authority and specific roles of each employee displayed on the notice board in the preschool room.

(2)

On the day of inspection, three adults were present, the deputy person in charge, two adults who were employed to work directly with the children. The registered provider was present of the morning of the inspection and for the feedback meeting at the end of inspection.

The following vetting information was available for six adults:

- (a) Ten written validated references from past employers for six of the adults.
- (b) Two written validated reference from reputable sources for two of the adults.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for six staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting from the police authorities in another state was available for one adult who had lived outside the state for a period of six consecutive months or more.

(4)

Six of the adult files reviewed, evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

### 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.*
- (4) *Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-*
- (a) *a sessional pre-school service, and*

*(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).*

### Compliance Information

- (1)  
On the day of inspection, there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the preschool children attending the service.
- (2)  
The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained at all times throughout the inspection. On the morning of the inspection there was three staff supervising eighteen children.
- (4)  
The staff roster confirmed that there were always at least two adults on the premises when children were present in the service.

## 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:*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis.*
  - (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

- (1)
- (i) Records pertaining to a staff roster was held for adults working within the service.
  - (j) Signed parental medication administration consent forms in place and available for review on the day of inspection.
  - (k) A sample of seven accident and incident forms were reviewed and contained the necessary information detailing the child's name, date and time, nature of incident, and signatures belonging to staff, management, and parents.

### 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

All meals and snacks are supplied daily by parents and arrive at the service each morning in the children's individual lunch bags. The service actively encourages parents to provide nutritionally balanced meals through its healthy Eating Policy. On the day of inspection, an adequate amount of food was available for every child, with a visible variety of healthy options observed, including ham sandwiches, yoghurts, and fresh fruit such as pineapple, grapes, and strawberries. Each child had their own individual drink bottle, and a dedicated water station situated in the main preschool room was available as an additional resource to ensure proper hydration. In instances where a child refused their initial meal, staff offered suitable alternatives from within the child's own lunchbox, and the service further ensured children's needs were met by providing options of cereal, toast, and fruit.

### 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 upon the inspector's unannounced arrival, preventing unauthorized access and unsupervised exits.
- The perimeter of outdoor area of the service was secured with high-level fencing.
- Materials and resources were visually clean and in good repair.
- Tables were cleaned before and after mealtimes.
- All electrical leads, flexes, and blind cords were securely fastened.
- Adequate handwashing facilities were provided, liquid soap was readily available for children to wash hands before eating and after toileting.
- Grapes were observed to be cut in the children lunches boxes to prevent choking.

### Infection Control:

- The service was cleaned daily and weekly up to date cleaning rosters were available on the premises for review.
- The materials and resources throughout the service were visually clean.
- Tables and were observed to be cleaned prior to and after mealtimes in the pre-school room.
- There was adequate handwashing facilities provided throughout the service, liquid soap and paper towels.
- The sanitary facilities were observed to be ventilated by openable windows. · Sanitary facilities were observed to be kept maintained and clean. ·
- Child friendly handwashing posters were placed beside the sinks.

### Administration of Medication:

- When interviewed, staff were aware of their responsibilities for the safe administration of medication. No medication was administered on the day of inspection.

### Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were observed to be unobstructed throughout the service.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.
- Fire extinguishers were on the premises and easily accessible.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

- (1) Chemicals were stored in an unlocked press in the main preschool room, which were accessible to the children; this poses a significant risk of accidental poisoning, chemical burns, or ingestion of toxic substances.
- (2) A rodent box was located in the outdoor play area accessible to the preschool children; this presents a risk of accidental contact with pest control equipment that should be restricted to areas inaccessible to children.
- (3) Coverings on the tables in the outdoor area were torn, exposing the wood beneath; this creates a risk of physical injury, such as splinters, cuts, or abrasions from the rough and damaged surfaces.
- (4) An open electrical back-box with unsecure wiring and loose hardware was accessible to the children; this poses a risk of electrocution (should the circuit be activated) and a choking hazard from the loose hardware.
- (5) An unsecured utility cupboard in the main preschool room, containing a hot water cylinder was found to be unlocked and accessible to the preschool.

### Infection Control:

- (6) The water temperature in the wash hand basin was measured at 13.9°C, which does not enable effective handwashing, presenting a risk of infection control issues.
- (7) Foot-operated bins were not in use in the service; instead, bins requiring physical touch to dispose of rubbish were utilized, which presents a risk of cross-contamination and general infection control issues.
- (8) The metal grab bar in the accessible sanitary area was heavily rusted with paint chipping off, making it difficult to clean effectively and posing an infection control risk.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. We have put a safety lock on the cabinet doors that store the cleaning chemicals. All staff have been informed on the safe storage of cleaning materials and the importance of ensuring the safety lock is used at all times to store the chemicals safely, out of reach of children.
2. I had a meeting with our pest control company; they removed any bait boxes that could potentially be reached by the pre-school children. Staff will check that all bait boxes are kept out of reach of children at the start of each session.
3. Coverings on tables in the outdoor area have been replaced. The manager will report any wear and tear to materials in the outdoor environment and ensure they are replaced in a timely manner.
4. The open electric back-box was fixed by an electrician immediately after the inspection. Any electricals work that is undertaken will be finished before children are allowed on site.
5. The utility cupboard has been secured with a safety lock. All staff to check that safety lock is securely in place at the beginning of each session.

##### Infection Control:

6. The water temperature has been amended by our Plummer and is now at the correct temperature for handwashing. Water temperature will be checked frequently and in particular immediately after work is carried out in the building that may affect the water temperature/pressure.
7. All bins have been replaced by foot operated pedal bins. When replacing or buying new bins the register provider will ensure that only foot operated pedal bins are used.
8. The grab bar has been removed. If anything in the service begins to show signs of rusting it will be replaced immediately.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

1. Photographic evidence submitted of safety lock on the cabinet doors that store the cleaning chemicals.
2. Photographic evidence submitted of removal of bait boxes that were accessible to the preschool children.
3. Photographic evidence submitted of replacement of coverings on tables in the outdoor area.
4. Photographic evidence submitted of back-box with exposed wires repaired.
5. Photographic evidence submitted that utility cupboard now secured with a safety lock.

#### Infection Control:

6. Photographic evidence submitted of water temperature been taken at acceptable levels.
7. Photographic evidence submitted of foot operated bins now in operation within the service.
8. Photographic evidence submitted of rusty grab bar removed.

### Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

## 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 service has a total of 4 staff members with up-to-date first aid response training on the day of inspection.
- (2)
  - (a) First aid boxes were held in storage in the office off the playroom in the building and in the toy storage shed in the outdoor play area.
  - (b) The first aid boxes were available to the preschool children at all times.

### 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.*
- (2)  
*The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-*
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,*
  - (b) an employee, and*
  - (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) A procedure was in place to practice and record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated the 08th December 2025.
  - (b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment and smoke detection system in the service was on file. Records indicated that the last annual maintenance for the firefighting equipment was dated 05th December 2025. The records for the smoke detection system indicated the last service occurred on 05th December 2025.
- (2)  
The record referred to in paragraph (1) was available and open to inspection by-
- (c) an authorised person.
- (4) On the day of inspection a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire were observed to be displayed in a conspicuous place within the premises.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 27 – Supervision

*A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.*

#### Compliance Information

On the day of the inspection, children were observed to be appropriately supervised at all times. Staff were strategically positioned across both indoor and outdoor environments, ensuring that all children remained within sight and sound. Supervision was active and attentive; staff were seen to sit closely with the children during mealtimes and remained directly engaged in their activities. Transition from outdoor to indoor was observed to be managed efficiently with staff communicating at all times what child were present or had been brought inside.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured adequate insurance was in place for the preschool service for 22 children up until 27th March 2026.