

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021RN002				
Name of Service:	Tir na nÓg Aughrim Kilmore Community Preschool				
Address of Service:	Dangan Community Centre, Kilmore, Carrick on Shannon, Co. Roscommon				
Eircode:	N41 T6K1				
Name of Registered Provider:	Jackie Ffrench McGirl				
Service type:	Part Time				
Date(s) of Inspection:	07/02/2025				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>15</td> <td>PM</td> <td>11</td> </tr> </table>	AM	15	PM	11
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, TUSLA, Child and Family Agency, Government Buildings, Convent Road, Roscommon, Co. Roscommon
Inspection undertaken by:	A. Kennedy
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
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Description of service

Tir na Nog Aughrim Kilmore Community preschool is registered since September 2021. It is based in a community centre in a rural setting and adjacent to the local primary school and church grounds. The service is situated on the outskirts of the village of Aughrim and between the towns of Carrick on Shannon and Elphin. The service operates from 9.20hrs to 13.50pm and provides sessional and part time day care to children from two years eight months to five years. The service is in a standalone building and consists of two large preschool rooms, an entrance hallway, a kitchenette, a toy storeroom, cleaning store and sanitary accommodation. An outdoor area with a large poly tunnel is located at the gable end of the building and parking is provided to the front of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider works directly with the children however she was not on the premises during the inspection. The deputy person in charge facilitated the inspection and there were three additional adults employed in the service and one adult employed under a community employment scheme.

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.

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 deputy person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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.

(3) Where a registered provider has been unable for good and proper reason to notify the Agency within the time specified in paragraph (1) or (2), as the case may be, of a 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), the registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing of the change as soon as possible thereafter.

Non-Compliance Information

This service is listed on the national register of early years services as operating a part time service between the hours of 9:20am to 13:50pm. During the inspection on 7th February 2025, it was observed that five preschool children remained on the premises after 13:50pm to attend the school aged service.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider submitted a written response to advise that the arrangement that the centre committee had for children staying after 1.50pm ceased immediately. The voluntary management committee hope to submit a Change in circumstance application in the future to extend our hours to facilitate a full day service.

Supporting documentation submitted

A copy of the services response to the correspondence sent from registration was submitted to the office of the early years' inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 8 has been adequately addressed and will be reviewed on next 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 deputy designated person in charge was on the premises and facilitated the inspection.

(b) The registered provider was not on the premises during the inspection however, the designated deputy person in charge was on the premises for the period of the inspection.

Documentary evidence in the form of staff rosters indicated that either the registered provider or the designated deputy person were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.

The files for registered provider, four staff and one person on a community employment scheme were reviewed.

(2)(a)(b) Twelve references on file in respect of the five staff and the person on a community employment scheme were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. and the service did adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting was on file for one staff member who had resided outside the outside the jurisdiction, for six months or more, while over the age of 18 years of age.

(4) The five staff hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 or over, in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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) On the day of inspection there were fifteen preschool children present with four staff working directly and supervising these children. The fifteen children were aged between two years and 6 months to five years and four of these children attended the service's Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programme from 09:30hrs to 12:30hrs with eleven children remaining with two adults until 13:50hrs for the part time session.

(2) Documentary evidence was provided to advise that the adult child ratios were adhered to.

On the morning of the inspection, there were 15 pre-school children aged between 2 years 6 months to 5 years.

- Five children were aged 2 years 6 months to 3 years 6 months.
- Ten children were aged 3 years 6months to 5 years.
- There were four childcare staff directly caring for these children.

In the afternoon, there were 11 pre-school children aged between 2 years 6 months to 5 years.

- Three children were aged 2 years 6 months to 3 years 6 months
- Eight children were aged 3 years 6 months to 5 years
- There were three childcare staff directly caring for these children until 13:30hrs and two adults caring for the children until 13:50hrs.

(8)(a) Documentary evidence in the form of staff rosters indicated that at least 2 staff were on the premises at all times when the pre-school was operating.

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

Compliance Information

- The staff were observed to support play activities that taught the children how to take turns, to listen, to share play resources and be mindful of those around them.
- Rules were kept simple and adults used simple clear guidance when communicating with the children. The children had opportunities to play on their own as well as engage with other children in small and large groups.
- On speaking with the staff, the inspector was informed that they verbally provided parents with daily information on their child's experiences in the service including the child's likes, interests and preferences and play activities engaged in. This information was provided at collection times, via text messages, and by phone call and via a bespoke childcare application.
- Children's behaviour was consistently managed in a competent and positive manner by the staff.
- The children could move about freely in their playroom and the outdoor area.
- The children were supported to interact appropriately with their peers and were confident and comfortable in their environment.
- Children had a spare set of clothes if required, and these were stored in the service.
- Aprons were provided for messy play opportunities.
- The staff provided significant opportunities for the child to decide their play activities and experiences. The early year inspector noted the staff acknowledged a child's achievements 'that is great' 'well done' and used questions such as 'what should we do next?', 'is there any other way to do this?', to allow children to critically think and explore.

- The toilet trained children were accompanied to the toilets by an adult and encouraged to toilet independently or with some assistance, as required
- It was advised during the inspection that only one child presently is not toilet trained.
- Nappy changing was carried out as required.
- Staff were observed to interact sensitively and appropriately with the children during these procedures.

Physical and material environment

- The pre-school room was bright, spacious and colourful.
- The room was laid out with clearly defined areas of play to include arts and crafts, large and small scale construction and manipulative materials; picture books, problem solving toys (e.g. jigsaws, pegboards and pegs and sorting exercises and board games), role and pretend play (e.g. play kitchen with play accessories, play work bench with accessories and cars/trucks) and messy play, small world toys (e.g. play animals, transport toys, play figures).
- Low level tables and chairs were in place and low-level shelving with equipment and materials were accessible to the children.
- A soft seated area was also provided for circle time activities and as a reading area should a child wish to relax or opt out of activities. Wall art and visual displays added additional decorative features to the indoor play environment and the poly tunnel.
- A store was also provided for the storage of additional play equipment.
- An outdoor play area was provided at the gable end of the building with direct access from the front access door to the community centre and the playroom. The service had sole use of the outdoor play area during operation hours. The play area was provided with a bark mulch finish and play equipment available included a large poly tunnel, 4 playhouses with swings and slides attached, a sand box in a sheltered space under a slide, work benches, push along and pull along toys on wheels and picnic tables and seating.

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

- There was a healthy eating policy. There was evidence that the foods consumed were adequate, nutritious, and varied.
- The deputy person in charge advised that healthy eating was promoted within the service by ongoing staff training, visual aids, and adherence to best practice guidelines.
- At 11.00hrs, the children had their snacks provided by parents and guardians, including a selection of fruit, yogurts, and yoghurts drinks. Crackers, rice cakes, and sandwiches/rolls of various fillings to include cheese and meat.
- The deputy person in charge advised that the children could consume an additional snack if they were attending the parttime service.
- Cutlery, plates, and crockery were offered for children’s meal / snack times.
- Clean and safe drinking water was at a low-level and accessible to children in the playroom and the polytunnel.

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 door leading into the pre-school facility was secured and remained secured throughout the inspection thus preventing children from exiting and unauthorised persons from entering the premises.
- A substantial quantity of appropriate cleaning products was maintained on-site which children could not access.
- Children were observed to be actively supervised by the adults at all times when playing in the indoor and outdoor environments during the inspection.
- The outdoor play area was securely gated and fenced.

- Toys and play equipment were developmentally appropriate, kept in good repair and did not pose an injury risk to children.
- The kitchenette was inaccessible to the preschool children.

Infection Control:

- The morning snacks were stored within the fridge within the preschool room and the poly tunnel.
- The inspector observed that the children washed their hands regularly throughout the inspection to include prior to consuming snack, after toileting and outdoor play.
- Suitable hand washing facilities were provided with supplies of liquid soap, disposable paper towels and thermostatically controlled hot water at each cubicle.
- The playroom and poly tunnel had cleaning products, and foot operated lidded bins.
- The pre-school room was well ventilated with the windows open throughout the inspection.
- Tabletops were cleaned immediately prior to children's snack break.
- Mouthed toys were removed after use and sterilised appropriately.
- The adults were observed regularly washing their hands including after disposing of tissues into bins.
- Fixtures, fittings and play resources were observed to be in a clean and hygienic condition.

Administration of Medication:

- There were no medications administered to children on the day. Procedures were in place for the safe administration of medication to children in the event this was required.
- Staff demonstrated appropriate awareness of the relevant safety procedures for administering medications to children when questioned.

Fire Safety:

- Records on file demonstrated that fire drills were carried out each month which helped to ensure that adults and children were familiar with the procedures in the event of an actual fire.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The plastic underlay on the woodchip in the outdoor area close to the climbing frame and slide was exposed and uneven in two sections and could pose a potential tripping risk.
2. A rubber tyre used for planting was cracked and could pose a potential safety risk.
3. The foot operated pedal bin was broken in the polytunnel.

Infection Control:

- The pressure of water from the hot water taps in the children's sanitary area was very weak with a temperature reading of 9.7°C which could prove difficult to enable effective handwashing.
- A parasol was stored in the adult sanitary accommodation which could pose a risk of cross contamination. It is acknowledged that this was removed immediately on the day of the inspection when alerted to the staff by the Early Years inspector.

Fire Safety:

- Three large beanbag chairs were stored at the fire escape doors which could prove an obstruction in event of an emergency.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective Action

The registered provider submitted a written response to advise

General Safety:

- Exposed underlay is covered regularly with woodchip.
- Cracked tyre was overturned and replanted
- The bin was removed after the inspection and replaced with a new pedal bin.

Infection Control:

- The solar panels that operate the water heat and pressure system was damaged in the recent storm. The plumber has by passed the solar panels with an immersion system. This repair work is ongoing.
- The parasol was removed from the sanitary accommodation and is now stored in alternative.

Fire Safety:

- Items obstructing fire escape doors were removed during the inspection.

Preventative action

General Safety:

- Regular raking of woodchip to cover exposed underlay. Adding more woodchip during the summer break.
- Tyres are regularly checked for potential safety risk.
- Regularly check pedal bins to ensure they are working properly.

Infection Control:

- The plumbers repair work is ongoing and will be regularly checked going forward.
- The parasol is now stored in a different place and all staff have been informed that it is not to be stored in the sanitary accommodation going forward.

Fire Safety:

- All staff and persons using the centre are regularly reminded to keep fire escape doors clear of obstructions and fire escape doors are regularly checked.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

The registered provider submitted photographic evidence of

- The woodchip being raked with no underlay exposed beside slide and in the playground
- The tyre turned over and replanted.
- Evidence of purchase of a new bin in the polytunnel.

Infection Control:

- A photo of the immersion switch with a sign to remind staff to turn water on 30mins before needed.

Fire safety

- A photo of the parasol being stored in a new area.
- A photo of the fire escape doors unobstructed.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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 provided evidence that there was a person trained in first aid for children was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. Three staff had evidence of first aid training.

(2)(a) In the playroom and the poly tunnel, there was a first aid box with content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position.

(b) The service demonstrated that the first aid boxes were fully equipped and available to the children attending the pre-school service.

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 was available of the monthly fire drills completed in the service.
The last recorded fire drill was carried out on 20th of January 2025.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the firefighting equipment and the smoke and fire detection system with annual service dated 27th of November 2024.
- (4) Notices were displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire in the premises.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service's insurance was for a full day care service, catering for a maximum number of 41 children, with an expiry date for the 27th of March 2025 and included the following -

- public liability insurance;
- insurance against fire and theft;
- buildings insurance;
- insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 - Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

(a) From a visual inspection the premises were of sound and stable structure.

The service's exterior walls, roof and foundation appeared to be structurally sound, weather/water-tight, to ensure protection from weather.

The interior floor and walls appeared to be well finished, with no evidence of mould.

(b) Exits were clearly identified and visible during service hours.

Electrical sockets were safe.

On the day of inspection, the playroom temperatures were 18.7°C to 19. °C.

The service had an oil heating system with radiators thermostatically controlled.

(c) There was natural lighting from the windows on the outer walls in the playroom.

The playroom was well ventilated by means of the openable windows and doors.

The artificial lighting provided was shatter proof.

(d) The service had a cleaning schedule.

(e) There were one designated staff toilet with a wash hand basin.

There were three toilets and two wash hand basins for children's use.

Non-Compliance Information

(d) There were sections of the ceiling in the main hall which had evidence of dampness and mould which requires further investigation.

(e) There was no designated wash hand basin in the nappy changing area. There were only two wash hand basins with two toilets and a nappy changing unit in the children's sanitary accommodation.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider submitted a written response to state

(d) Tiles on the roof were damaged in the recent storm. These tiles were replaced by a contractor on the afternoon of the inspection. The ceiling in the main hall was dried, treated and re-painted. This will be monitored more regularly going forward.

(e) There are two wash hand basins with three toilets and a nappy changing unit in the indoor sanitary accommodation. The number of children catered for this year does not exceed the regulations of one sink per eleven children. One sink is for children's use and one sink is dedicated for hand washing in the nappy changing area.

Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted evidence of

(d) A photo of the ceiling with the damp removed and the roof tiles replaced.

(e) A photo of the two sinks with signage to advise of sink to be used for handwashing after nappy changing and the second sink to be used for the toilet trained children.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 29 have been adequately addressed and will be reviewed on next inspection.