

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2025CC003
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Múin Preschool Carrigaline
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Carrigaline GAA Club, Crosshaven Road, Kilnaglery, Carrigaline, Co Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	P43 DA09
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Kate Gaffney, Clodagh Barrett
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<b>Service type:</b>	Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	21/11/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	10	PM	4
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St Mary's Health Campus, Gurrabraher, Cork T23 X440
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	D Prendergast
<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>	N/A
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### Description of service

Múin Preschool Carrigaline was recently registered as a part time service, catering for children aged 2 to 6 years. This includes children attending the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme, which operates from 9.00am to 12.00pm, each Monday to Friday, over 38 weeks of the year. Daily opening hours are from 9.00am to 2.00pm.

Situated on the grounds of Carrigaline GAA club, the service is provided from the first floor of a detached, two storey building. There is one care room with adjoining children's and staff sanitary facilities. There is a designated outdoor play space beside the premises and the service also has the use of an enclosed pitch, across from the building. A car park is available on site.

### Staffing

There are five adults attached to the early years service, including the registered providers and one relief staff member. One of the registered providers is currently working at the setting and the second registered provider is not service based.

### 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 announced 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 registered provider, person in charge, deputy 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)
- (a) There was a person in charge and a designated deputy assigned to the service.
  - (b) Upon the inspector's arrival, the registered provider, person in charge and deputy were working at the setting and remained to facilitate the inspection process. Further examination of the staff attendance records demonstrated that at least one of the above was present on the premises during the hours of operation.
  - (c) A management structure was in place and the roles and responsibilities of each employee were set out.
- (2) Recruitment records in respect of the five adults attached to the setting were assessed for compliance and the following information was obtained:
- (a) Ten written and validated references were required in total. Of these, six had been provided by past employers.
  - (b) There were four references on file from sources other than previous employers.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all five adults. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
  - (d) Police vetting was deemed to be required for one of the adults and was maintained on file.
- (4) The records provided demonstrated that each of the four adults who were involved in the direct care of the children, held a recognised award in Early Childhood Care and Education, with copies of the qualifications available.

### 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) At the time of inspection, it was observed that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with children.

(2) The required adult to child ratios were exceeded:

- During the morning sessional service, 3 adults were available to the 10 children in attendance, who were aged 2 ½ to 3 ½ years.
- Four of these children remained to avail of part time care and were under the care and supervision of three adults.

(8)

(a) There were at least two adults rostered to work at the service, for the duration of the hours of operation.

### 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

#### Compliance Information

##### (1)(a)

##### Basic needs:

- The children were accommodated to have a snack break at 10.45am. During this time, it was noted that staff members were readily available to the children, offered appropriate assistance and encouraged conversation. Shortly before 12.20pm, a second snack was facilitated, for the children who attended part time care.
- The children's reusable water bottles were stored within their reach, on a low table, should they require additional fluids.
- A suitable cosy area was available in the care room, for any child that required quiet time or space to relax.
- A box of tissues, a mirror and an adjacent bin were accessible at the children's eye level, which promoted the development of self-care skills. A staff member was also observed to assist one of the children to clean their nose.
- The children's use of the sanitary facilities was supervised by the adults, with verbal prompts provided, as the need arose.
- The layout of the care room afforded children the ability to move freely, as they initiated and participated in various activities. The outdoor play space was also utilised during the morning.

##### Supporting relationships:

- The adults were observed to be kind, patient and encouraging in their interactions with the children. Staff members also demonstrated a good knowledge of the children's individual personalities and care needs; minor disputes were sensitively addressed and behavioural issues were appropriately managed.

- Regular communication with the children’s parents was ensured through the use of a digital application. This application included provision for staff to send and receive messages, to share photographs and to provide updates to parents, regarding upcoming events. Informal daily conversation at arrival and collection times and phone calls, were also utilised.
- The person in charge advised that staff had incorporated the use of a messaging application to share ideas and to plan curriculum activities. Examples of said communication were demonstrated to the inspector. It was also stated that staff meetings were held approximately once per month, to facilitate planning and to discuss the needs of the children.

### 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

- Food for the children’s meals and snacks was supplied by their parents or caregivers.
- The person in charge confirmed that a copy of the healthy eating policy had been provided to parents at the beginning of the school year and that parents had also signed this policy.
- On the day of inspection, examples of the children’s snacks included filled wraps, sandwiches, crackers, cheese, yogurts and a selection of fruit. Water was available as a drink. Similar options were observed during the second snack period.
- The inspector was advised that some of the children had food allergies or intolerances. This was managed through ensuring that all parents were aware of the service’s nut free policy. In addition, the person in charge informed the inspector that staff members checked the children’s lunches each day, upon the children’s arrival and again before the mid-morning snack time.
- During discussion, it was confirmed that if a child became hungry outside of the allocated mealtimes, they were free to choose something to eat from their lunch box.

### 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:

- A door sensor alarm was in place on the interior of the care room door, which was also a fire exit door. This reduced the risk of a child exiting supervised.
- The service's outdoor play area was enclosed by fencing and gates.
- Restrictive opening devices were in place on low-level cupboards in the care room.
- Fire extinguishers were securely wall mounted.
- Good supervision was ensured by the adults during outdoor play.

##### Infection control:

- The practice of hygienic handwashing and drying was supported by the availability of warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels, at the children's and adults' wash hand basins. Handwashing was observed before snack time and after outdoor play.
- Perishable snacks that belonged to the children were refrigerated, which reduced the risk of food spoilage.
- A combination of labelled cubby shelving and trays were used to store the children's coats, bags and personal belongings.
- A cleaning schedule was in place and corresponding records were displayed.
- Cleaning, such as sanitising tables and sweeping the floor, was carried out by staff members during the morning.

##### Administration of medication:

- The medication that had been prescribed for one of the children was safely stored, labelled and was in-date.

##### Fire safety:

- The emergency fire doors were clearly identified and were unobstructed.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### General safety:

In the care room, two cables that were connected to the printer, had not been secured and were accessible at child level. This posed a risk of injury to a child.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

The written reply outlined that the cable has been secured to the door. As a preventive measure, staff will ensure that all leads are out of reach of children and if an appliance has a lead, it will be secured.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence.

### Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted are accepted in meeting the regulatory requirements.

## 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.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) The service provided evidence that three adults held up to date First Aid Responder (FAR) certification and that at least one of these adults was always on the premises during operational hours.

## 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,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*

#### Compliance Information

(a) From a visual assessment, the premises appeared to be of sound and stable structure.

#### Non-Compliance Information

(c) Air temperatures in the care room and in the sanitary facility were not maintained within the required range of 18°C to 22°C, despite the use of electric heating in the care room. The care room had a recorded air temperature of 15°C at 10.23am and a subsequent temperature reading of 14.9°C at 11.22am. A temperature

of 13°C was recorded in the sanitary facility at 10.23am. It was acknowledged that a window was open at this time, however, the temperature was five degrees below the required minimum temperature.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

An electrician has installed a third radiator in the care room, which is larger than the other radiators. Staff will ensure that the window in the sanitary facility is kept closed during colder days. Going forward, staff will take daily air temperatures and if required, another radiator will be installed.

### Supporting documentation submitted

A photograph of the radiator.

## Summary Comment

The corrective action implemented has addressed the non-compliance identified under Regulation 29.