

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL022
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Churchill Community Childcare
-------------------------	-------------------------------

Address of Service:	Patton Memorial Hall, Trentagh, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal
----------------------------	--

Eircode:	F92 R592
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Linda Anderson
-------------------------------------	----------------

Service type:	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

Date of Inspection:	11/06/2026
----------------------------	------------

No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	N/A
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	-----

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Donegal Early Years Inspectorate, St. Conal's Campus, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. F92 TD92
Inspection undertaken by:	N Toner
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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Churchill Community Childcare is an early years' service situated in the rural district of Trentagh between Churchill village and Letterkenny town in County Donegal. The service which has been in operation since 1997 is governed by Churchill Childcare Ltd, a non-profit local community group. The sessional service is provided for children aged 2 – 6 years. The service operates weekdays from 09.30 – 12:30pm for the duration of the pre-school year. The service operates from the local parish hall for which it has sole use during the hours of operation. The main hall is used to provide a spacious playroom which has adjoining kitchen and sanitary facilities. There is no specific outdoor play area. Children have occasional nature trips to the adjacent grassy sloped area on the parish hall grounds.

Staffing

There are always two adults on the premises. The registered provider and a second adult, work directly with the children. There are two further adults available to provide emergency cover if required.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 21, 23, 25 and 26.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 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 accountability in the service and the specific roles and responsibilities of each employee.

(2)

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that one adult had been employed since the previous inspection on the

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

21st January 2025. This adult employed worked directly with the children as emergency cover and their file was reviewed. In addition, Garda vetting for 1 staff member whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review.

(c)

A Garda vetting disclosure was available for the adult, and the disclosures had been received prior to the adults having access to preschool children. The garda vetting disclosure was in date. The additional garda vetting for review was in date.

(d) International police vetting was not required for 1 adult who had not resided outside of the state for a period of six consecutive months or more as an adult.

(4) Two of the staff members previously reviewed had attained major awards in Early childhood care and education at level 5 or above on the national framework of qualifications, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) to meet the regulatory requirement.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(a)(b) There were no references from one person's past employers, and in particular no reference from the adults most recent employer. There were no references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers on file for one adult reviewed.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b) The registered provider submitted updated written and validated references to the inspectorate. The registered provider will ensure that all references are on file for all adults working in the service. The registered provider will ensure that relief staff and emergency cover staff have up to date references on file.

Supporting documentation submitted

Two written and validated references were submitted to the inspectorate for two adults.

Policy on Emergency cover / relief staff and policy for relief staff on references and curriculum vitae.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 9 (2)(a) & (b).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that on the day of inspection, the adult to child ratio was always maintained at the minimum specified ratios as follows:
- Two adults cared for 12 children aged between 2 years of age and 5 years of age.

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*
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.*

Compliance Information

(1) (a)(b)

Basic Needs

On the day of inspection, all children had access to clean drinking water, and their drink bottles were stored on the water station in the room. Food and snacks were provided by parents. Lunch boxes were stored in the fridge in each of the care rooms. Mealtime was observed to be a very social occasion between all children and staff

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Children are encouraged to help with setting the table, serving themselves using proper utensils, and clearing up afterward. The children who were toileting independently were prompted to do so and supervised from a distance. Staff encouraged hand hygiene and this was observed throughout the inspection. The adults interacted kindly with children, supporting and listening to them throughout the morning. There was strong evidence of respect and compassion throughout the service. Staff members were observed to be respectful, gentle and kind in their interactions with the children. They comforted two children who became upset at different times by listening and reassuring them. They engaged in conversations during morning roll call, snack time and circle time, allowing children to lead discussions. The adults posed open-ended questions throughout the more formal discussions surrounding sharing of toys and tidying up. Independent thinking and self-reflection were always encouraged. The “news” section was had after lunch where children described what was going on in their lives. All children appeared to show keen interest in each other’s news stories

Physical and materiel environment

Children the preschool room was well organised. The room was divided into various interest areas including, a home corner, small world, construction, shop, sensory, arts and crafts and a cosy reading and rest area. It was well resourced with ample materials suited to the children’s age and stage of development. Three tables offered activities that supported fine motor skills. The tables gave the children a choice between free and structured play. Children were observed to move independently around the room.

Picogramme of Activities

During circle time, the staff led by reading poems and singing songs and the children joined in. Then an interactive game took place where the staff would throw a ball to the children who needed to practice coordination skills and throw the ball back to the staff. All children cheered and a sense of teamwork by the children was observed. Two children who decided not to engage in the game where free to move around the room to different interest areas where the second staff was engaging with them as they focused on sensory play. Each child had an individual activity book which documented outings and activities as well as samples of the children’s art and craft work and records of the themes explored.

Supporting Relationships

The service supported children’s relationships by keeping parents and guardians fully informed of daily activities using communication books, which provided updates on activities throughout the day. Photographs of the

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

children's families displayed on the walls of the care rooms further supported children's sense of security and connection to home. Information was given to parents at handover at the start and end of the day as numbers in the service allowed for one-to-one handover between parents and staff.

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 registered provider ensured that there was suitable and adequate furniture and play materials and resources available for the preschool children:

This room supported children from 2 to 5 years of age. The room is visually appealing with the children's artwork and educational posters adding colour to the walls of the room. Clearly defined interest areas were set up to give the children opportunities for imaginary; role play and creativity. Home corners were equipped with kitchens, dolls, baby changing tables and cots. A construction area was equipped with building blocks, cars trucks and road tracks. Low level accessible shelving was equipped with a variety of fine motor skill toys including magnets, suckers, tweezers and counting toys. Sensory play was supported with water and sand tables. Fine motor skills were displayed throughout the service through jigsaws, art and craft and puzzles. Child sized tables and chairs suitable for the age of the children was available for the numbers attending the service. The service had a variety of equipment and materials which were adequate and suitable for the children attending. A rest area with child size sofa and soft furnishings provided a comfortable area to rest or read a book.

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 service was secure on the inspectors unannounced arrival to the service.
- The outdoor perimeter was secured with wooden fencing on the entrance and a locked wooden gate.
- Cleaning products were stored out of reach of the preschool.
- Windows had restrictors in place to protect children from injury.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Infection Control:

- The service was observed to be clean with up-to-date cleaning schedules in place.
- Warm water, liquid soap, and paper towels were provided for effective hand hygiene.
- There is evidence of the policy on infection control being implemented.

Fire Safety:

- On the day evacuation doors remained clear ensuring safe egress from the service in an emergency

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) On the day of inspection, the registered provider ensured that a member of staff was trained in first aid for children (FAR) and was available to children attending the service.

(2) (a)(b) The first aid equipment was fully stocked and readily available if a child required first aid treatment.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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 fire fighting 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 record of fire drills as conducted was maintained in the service. It was noted that the last monthly fire drill was conducted on 29th of May 2026.
- (b) The maintenance record for the firefighting equipment indicated that an annual service was conducted in April 2026. The maintenance record for the smoke alarm system indicated that a service was last conducted on 20th April 2026 and is serviced quarterly.
- (4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was wall mounted in all playrooms. A fire assembly point was positioned on the grounds at the side of the building.