

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

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| <b>TUSLA Identifier:</b> | TU2015KY055 |
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| <b>Name of Service:</b> | Cromane Community Childcare Centre |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------|

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|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of Service:</b> | Cromane Upper, Cromane, Killorglin, Co. Kerry |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|

|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| <b>Eircode:</b> | V93 WY9E |
|-----------------|----------|

|                                     |              |
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| <b>Name of Registered Provider:</b> | Aoife Benton |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|

|                      |                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Service type:</b> | Full Day, Part Time, Sessional |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|

|                               |            |
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| <b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b> | 17/06/2026 |
|-------------------------------|------------|

|                                   |    |    |    |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| <b>No of pre-school children:</b> | AM | 45 | PM | 29 |
|-----------------------------------|----|----|----|----|

|                                                 |                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b> | Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co Kerry |
| <b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>                | M. Burke and N. Reidy                         |
| <b>Title:</b>                                   | Early Years Inspectors                        |

### 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).

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### Description of service

Cromane Community Childcare Centre is a community-based service in County Kerry, which is registered to provide full day care, part-time and sessional care, catering for children between the age of 1 to 6 years. The service operates between the hours of 08:00 am and 6:00 pm Monday to Friday inclusive, incorporating the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Scheme between the hours of 09:00 am and 12 mid-day.

The premise consists of 3 playrooms, namely the Rainbow and Sunshine rooms located in the main building and the Cabin located at the side of the building. The sanitary accommodation for the children is located within each of the playrooms. The children have access to designated outdoor play areas and to the community playground and the basketball court located directly behind the service outdoor play area.

### Staffing

There are a total of 16 staff employed in the service, 12 Early Years Practitioners, of which 1 is an Access Inclusion Model (AIM) worker, who work directly with the children, 2 school age workers. The registered provider is not service based. In addition, there is 1 cleaner.

### 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.

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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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

### Statutory Notices

| Notice                        | Date Served                                                                                                                                    | Detail                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Improvement Notice<br>IN 3181 | 17/06/2026                                                                                                                                     | (9) (2) (d) Police Vetting was not translated for one staff member who had access to the children. |
| <b>Status</b>                 | The registered provider submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions, which were accepted by the Inspectorate. |                                                                                                    |

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### 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.*

*(7) A registered provider shall ensure that all employees, unpaid workers and contractors are appropriately supervised and provided with appropriate information, and where necessary training, including in relation to the following:*

- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;*

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### Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) A person in charge had been appointed to the service, and a deputy had been assigned to deputise in their absence. Both were present and available to assist with the inspection process.
- (b) The person in charge was working at the service when the inspectors arrived and remained for the duration of the inspection.
- (c) A wall display in the main reception area clearly set out the names and roles of the service's staff and included individual photographs. There was a clear line management structure in place and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

(2) Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, it was determined that 7 new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. 6 staff members work directly with the children. One staff member is a cleaner and does not have access to children. A total of 7 files were reviewed.

- (a) There were 13 written and validated references on file from past employers.
- (b) One reference and validation was from a source other than a previous employer.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 6 staff working with children. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting with a verified translation where required was available for 3 staff members.

(4)

Records demonstrated that 4 staff members working directly with children had a minimum of Level 5 and above in Early Childhood Education and Care qualification as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications.

(7)

(a) The registered provider ensured the staff were provided with appropriate information and training. This was evidenced by:

- Induction checklists for all employees which detailed they had read and understood the services policies.
- Certificates of training completed by staff for courses attended, which included certificates in Children First Child Protection and Welfare, fire safety, behaviour management and first aid response.
- The manager facilitated staff supervision meetings regularly and as needed, and notes were kept on file. Regular team meetings were held, and minutes of these were available for review.

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### Non-Compliance Information

(2)

(d)

See statutory notice section in relation to an Improvement Notice IN 3181 served.

### 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 minimum ratios were maintained at all times throughout the day.

The required adult to child ratios were observed in each of the care rooms as follows:

#### Rainbow room

There were 3 staff caring for 10 children aged between 1 and 3 years attending, 3 children were attending on a sessional basis and 7 children on a full day care basis.

#### Sunshine room

There were 3 staff caring for 14 children aged between 3 years and 5 years, 2 children were attending on a sessional basis, and 12 children were attending on a part-time and full day care basis.

#### Cabin

There were 2 staff caring for 21 children aged between 4 years and 5 years attending on a sessional service. This room is used for the care of school age children only in the afternoon.

(8)(a) The registered provider ensured that 2 staff members were on the premises during the hours of operation.

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### 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:*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

(k) The service maintained written and digital records of an accident, injury or incident involving a child attending the service.

Records for each of the 3 playrooms were sampled and found to be completed and signed in full.

### 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*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that no practices that are disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglectful are carried out in respect of a pre-school child whilst attending the service.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)(a)

#### **Basic Needs:**

- The service promoted healthy eating, providing regular food and snacks during the day with all the food provided by the parents/guardians.
- The food served for snack time in the Rainbow room included sandwiches, yogurts and crackers with water to drink.
- The food served for the main meal in the Sunshine room included for example pasta with vegetables and chicken with vegetables.

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- Children in the Rainbow room were served buttered crackers, sliced banana and satsumas in the afternoon.
- The mealtimes were unhurried, the children had ample time to eat and enjoy their food.
- During the mealtimes observed the staff sat with the children, promoting social interactions and assisting with feeding as was required.
- Children had access to their individual drink's bottles on the low-level shelving throughout the day.
- The children were observed to be dressed appropriately whilst playing in the outdoor areas, with sunhats and sunscreen applied and re-applied during the day.
- The children's toilets were accessible in each of the care rooms; this allowed the children to use the toilet as they needed with assistance provided by the staff as required.
- In conversation with the staff in the Rainbow room, nappy changing was carried out at regular intervals during the day and as required.
- The children's individual toileting needs were met, such as children transitioning from wearing nappies to using the potty and the toilet.

### Supporting relationships:

- In conversation with the staff, they communicated with parents/guardians via an on-line application and in person, providing parents with an insight into their children's learning, development and the daily activities the children took part in during their time in the centre.
- The inspectors observed that parents were greeted at collection time in a professional, unhurried and caring manner, when staff gave a summary of the time the child spent in the service.
- The staff were observed to be kind, caring, respectful and sensitive to the children's individual needs.

### Physical & Material Environment:

- The playrooms within the service were spacious and provided children the opportunity to move about freely and explore the environment.
- The toys and play materials supplied were stored on low level open shelving in the rooms. This supported children to readily and independently access them, offering continuous choice.
- Rest areas were provided in each of the playrooms to facilitate children to rest/relax or opt out of an activity. The areas were furnished with a variety of low- level soft seating, cushions and matting.

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- The rooms were bright and naturally ventilated by means of the windows that were open throughout the day.
- The rooms had a selection of children's artwork and family photographs with a variety of potted plants in place on the high-level window ledges and shelving.
- The person in charge informed the inspectors that plans are in place to paint the premises indoors when the centre closes for summer holidays.
- The rooms were furnished with low level tables and chairs that were in a clean and well-maintained condition.
- Since the last inspection the service had installed a kitchenette area comprising of sinks, worktop, re-heating units, toasters, under counter and above counter cupboards.
- All the children attending the service on the day of the inspection availed of long periods of time playing in the outdoors.
- There was a variety of play areas in the outdoor play. There were canopies that provided shelter from the elements and a variety of artificial grass, concrete and grass surfaces underfoot.
- There was a range of multi-sensorial play experiences provided for the children that included for example, playhouses, sand and water play, play kitchens, a selection an obstacle unit and ride on toys.
- The person in charge informed the inspectors that a section of soft matting is due for installation in the outdoor area over the coming weeks.

(3)

Disrespectful, degrading, exploitive, intimidating, emotionally or physically harmful or neglecting practices towards children were not observed at the time of inspection. During observations, staff were seen to been caring towards the children, comforted children and responded calming as needed and spoke to children in clear soft tones using age-appropriate language.

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### 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 emergency exit doors observed on inspection were unobstructed.
- The emergency exit door with the low- level openable door handle in the Cabin was fitted with a working alarm to alert staff if it was opened.
- Each of the playrooms were secured by means of a fob entry system and a high-level push button to exit the rooms, to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised access in.
- Cleaning agents observed on inspection were stored out of the reach of the children.
- The blind cords observed in the rooms were secured.
- The inspector observed the first aid bag was brought to the basketball court and stored hanging from the high-level fencing when the children played there as observed during the inspection.

##### Infection Control:

- The children's toiletries were noted to be individually labelled.
- The sinks observed in use by the adults and children had a supply of thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels. Lidded pedal bins were in place for the hygienic disposal of waste.
- The nappy changing area serving the Rainbow room was equipped with clean and intact nappy changing mats with the surrounding areas maintained in a clean condition.
- The windows were open in the sanitary accommodation to provide natural ventilation.
- There were lidded, sealed and foot operated bins in use for the hygienic disposal of nappies.
- There were waterproof mattresses provided on each of the 4 cots in use on inspection.
- The linen used for the cots observed on inspection was noted to be clean, dry and are stored in individually labelled bags.
- Since the last inspection the service installed a spacious storage press in the reception area to store the stackable beds and spare cots.
- Children were observed to wash their hands with assistance provided by the staff for example in the Sunshine room after coming in from the outdoors and before eating lunch.

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- Boxes of tissues were provided in the playrooms and outdoors for the hygienic cleaning of noses.

### Administration of Medication:

- The inspectors were informed that no children present on the day of the inspection were in receipt of medication.

### Safe Sleep:

- Staff in the Rainbow room stated that sleeping children's breathing, colour and position was physically checked every 5 minutes as was evidenced in the electronic records examined on inspection.
- The air temperature of the sleep room was within the required range; it was recorded at 20 degrees Celsius.
- Staff stated that the sleep room is ventilated by means of the openable windows on arrival in the morning and throughout the day.
- During the inspection, the children attending the Rainbow room slept in the cots in the sleep room. In addition, the older children slept in an allocated area of the playroom on low-level beds.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

- There were 2 unused cooling units with cables attached stored on the floor in the cabin room posing a risk of injury to children.
- While children were playing in the basketball court, there was 1 unsecured gate. The children could exit the area unsupervised and unauthorised persons could go into the area posing a risk of injury to children.
- There was a basket of children's toiletries accessible to children on a low-level shelf in the sanitary accommodation in the Sunshine room posing a risk of injury to children.
- There was a section of low-level timber fencing with vertical slats located in the outdoor play area. Children could climb over it, out to the unsecured gate leading directly to the carpark and roadway posing a risk of injury to children.

#### Infection Control:

- The soft vinyl floor matting in the Cabin and the vinyl matting and cushions under the covered in section of the outdoor play area serving the Rainbow room had torn areas. This impacted on the ability to clean them adequately posing a risk of cross infection.
- A staff member cleaned a child's nose with a face cloth and cleaned the child's hands with the same towel posing a risk of cross infection.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### General Safety:

1. The 2 unused cooling units were removed from the cabin. The service has replaced the fans with air cooling units that are in place high up and out of the reach of the children.
2. Clips that are tight fitting and difficult to remove were purchased immediately. The staff were advised the clips are to be taken out to the basketball court for use to ensure the safety of children. The adult child ratios are maintained at all times for the safety of the children.
3. A box with the children's individually labelled toiletries was placed out of the reach of all children in the bathroom in the Sunshine room.
4. Additional netting was purchased and secured to the inside of the fencing. The fencing was subsequently replaced with a new wooden fence with horizontal slats.

##### Infection Control:

5. All the vinyl flooring and mats in the cabin were replaced new matting. The soft matting in the outdoor area serving the rainbow room was replaced and some was repaired with vinyl tape where possible. The equipment will be regularly checked, cleaned, maintained and repaired/replaced as needed to prevent cross contamination and to ensure any repairs are still in place. The service plan to re-cover the soft play mats.
6. The infection control policy was updated, and it was re-issued to the staff who signed off that they have read, understood and comply with the updated policy guidelines.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### General Safety:

1. A photograph of the air-cooling fan in place up high and out of the reach of the children.
2. The statement is accepted as evidence.
3. Photographs of the children's toiletries stored on a high-level shelf in the sanitary accommodation in the Sunshine room.
4. A photograph of the newly installed timber fencing.

##### Infection Control:

5. A photograph of a selection of the new soft coloured furnishings and of the repaired furnishing. The updated completed daily checklists.

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### Summary Comment

The documentation received was examined. The requirement for this regulation has been met.

### 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 certifications on file demonstrating that three staff members attached to the service had current First Aid Responder (FAR) training completed. The person in charge furnished the inspectors with evidence in respect of 11 staff members who completed FAR training and are awaiting the certificates.

(2)

(a) The sufficiently equipped first aid bags were stored out of the reach of children.

(b) At all times when the service was in operation, the first aid bags were accessible to the adults if children required them.

### 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.*

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### Compliance Information

The requirement has been met.

- (1)
- (a) The service had a template of monthly fire drills recorded in each care room. The last recorded fire drill took place on 12 June 2026 for the morning and afternoon sessions.
- (b) A record of the number and type of firefighting equipment and for the wired smoke alarm was available for inspection. It was recorded that firefighting equipment was serviced on 03 December 2025 and the smoke alarm system was serviced on the 10 September 2025.
- (4) A notice of evacuation procedures in the event of a fire was displayed in each of the care rooms.

### 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

- The indoor and outdoor areas were adequately supervised by qualified staff as observed throughout the inspection. The children were observed to be in the radius of sight and/or sound of the staff. Staff were well positioned to supervise the children at play.
- Children, depending on their age, were escorted to the toilet by a staff member and asked children if they needed assistance and given privacy as required.
- The inspectors observed the children sleeping in the Rainbow room were supervised by adults at all times.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

### Compliance Information

The requirement has been met.

Adequate insurance was in place. The service was insured to provide full day care for a maximum of 64 children, and the policy was valid until 27 March 2027.