

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015OY034
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Name of Service:	Clonbullogue Community Pre-School Ltd.
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Address of Service:	Health Centre, Clonbullogue, Co. Offaly
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Eircode:	R45 P381
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Name of Registered Provider:	Gráinne Gallagher Ridgeway
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	09/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	12	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Child and Family Agency Primary Care Centre Church Avenue Tullamore Co Offaly R35 K1W4
Inspection undertaken by:	R Flynn
Title:	Early Years Inspector

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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).

Description of service

Clonbullogue Community Pre-School Ltd is a sessional service located in the rural village of Clonbullogue, Co Offaly. The preschool building is a converted national school, which is used solely by the preschool.

The service provides sessional care and education to children aged between 2 and 6 years old, Monday to Friday between 09:15-12:15pm. The premises consists of a hall, one preschool room and a portacabin attached to the rear of the building. Enclosed outdoor play areas are located to the front, side and back of the premises. Car parking and set down is available in the car park to the back of the premises and the public road outside the service.

Staffing

The registered provider employs one childcare staff to work in the service. The registered provider works directly with the children and facilitated the inspection on 09 June. The registered provider and staff member were both present on the day of inspection.

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

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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:

Regulation 9(1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d),(4) – Management and Recruitment

Regulation 11 (1)(3)– Staffing Levels

Regulation 15 – Record of preschool child,

Regulation 16 – Record in relation to preschool service,

Regulation 19(1)(a) Health, Welfare and Development of Child

Regulation 23 – Safeguarding Health, Safety and Welfare of child

Regulation 25(1), (2)(a)(b) – First Aid

Regulation 26(1)(a)(b), (4) – Fire Safety Measures

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.

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

(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 designated person in charge and a named person to deputise as required.

(b)

The named person in charge remained on the premises for the duration of the inspection.

(2)

Two staff files including the registered providers were reviewed and the following was noted:

(a)

Two written validated references were available from a previous employer and

(b)

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Two written validated references were available from a reputable source.

(c)
Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for both staff members. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)
Police vetting was not required as no staff had lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months as an adult.

(4)
One employed childcare staff member and the registered provider working directly with the pre-school children attending the service held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education Level 6 to Level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications.

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)
An adequate number of adults were working directly with the preschool children on the day of inspection.

(3)
The ratio of adults to children was maintained on the day of the inspection.
There were twelve children aged between 2-6 years being supervised directly by two adults.

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Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 15 – Record of pre-school child

(1) A registered provider of a pre-school service other than a pre-school service in a drop-in centre or a temporary pre-school service shall ensure that a record in writing is kept in respect of each pre-school child attending the service containing the following particulars:

- (a) the name and date of birth of the child;*
- (b) the date on which the child first attended the service;*
- (c) the date on which the child ceased to attend the service;*
- (d) the name and address of a parent or guardian of the child and a telephone number where that parent or guardian or a relative or friend of the child can be contacted during the hours of operation of the service;*
- (e) authorisation for the collection of the child;*
- (f) details of any illness, disability, allergy or special need of the child, together with all the information relevant to the provision of special care or attention;*
- (g) the name and telephone number of the child's registered medical practitioner;*
- (h) record of immunisations, if any, received by the child;*
- (i) written parental consent for appropriate medical treatment of the child in the event of an emergency.*

Compliance Information

A sample of 12 records were reviewed. The registered provider ensured that a record in writing was kept of the details relating to (a) to (i) of the above regulation for all the records reviewed.

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:

- (a) the name, position, qualifications and experience of the person in charge and of every other employee, unpaid worker and contractor;*
- (b) details of the class of service and the age profile of children for which the service is registered to provide services;*
- (c) details of the adult:child ratios in the service;*
- (d) the type of care or programme provided in the service;*

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- (e) the facilities available;*
- (f) the opening hours and fees;*
- (g) the policies, procedures and statements the service is required to maintain in accordance with Regulation 10;*
- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

Compliance Information

- (1)
The service kept and maintained written records of information in relation to the service in an Information Booklet in accordance with Regulation 16 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g).
- (h)
The attendance records of children were recorded at the time of children entering and leaving the service.
- (i)
A rolling roster was in place for the two staff working in the service and reflected the adults working in the service.
- (j)
A medication administration record book was available in the service. The inspector was informed by the registered provider that medication is not routinely given to children attending the service.
- (k)
A sample of 9 accident and incidents records were reviewed. These records were signed by staff and parents and were completed appropriately.

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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

Children were observed eating a packed lunch provided by their parents. Flexibility was provided with the service promoting a rolling snack time. Children were observed to eat when they felt hungry. Children retrieved their lunch bags independently from the fridge as they wished. Staff sat with the children during snack times and engaged in conversation. Children's drink bottles were accessible to the children and within reach throughout the session. The children sat together at low level tables while eating and engaging in conversations with each other. Regular hand washing was observed as children washed their hands before snack time, after toileting and as needed.

Self-toileting was supported, and children were supervised as necessary.

Supporting relationships

Staff members were observed to be warm, kind and respectful towards the children in their care. Children were spoken to using their first names, appropriate eye contact was made, and soft vocal tones were used during interactions. Staff were observed to provide hugs and place the children on their laps if a child requested. The children's daily routine was positioned at child's eye level assisting the children to feel secure.

Children were observed sitting at tables in the garden updating their individual learning journals. The children were provided with colours, stickers and photographs taken during the academic year, to personalise and decorate their journals to provide to parents at the end of the year.

The staff advised the inspector that information and updates regarding the service are provided to parents at drop off and collection times, and via an electronic messaging application.

Physical and material environment

Emphasis is placed on the outdoor environment, where the children were observed for the full session during the inspection. The outdoor play area is well resourced and separated into different spaces providing the children an

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opportunity for freedom of movement and space to play. The children were observed engaged, active and involved throughout the session as they chose between activities. Children were engaged in an activity they titled 'fixing the hole in the road' whereby the children retrieved basins of water from the outdoor tap, poured water into a pretend hole and used equipment such as tuff trays on the ground, sweeping brushes to spread the water, watering cans to pour water over the ground and basins to fix the road. Staff provided wellies and long aprons to protect the children's clothing while they enjoyed their role play activity. Children were observed find pebbles in the garden, pour them into the tuff tray with water, and stamp and jump in the tuff tray. Other children used watering cans to water strawberries that they had planted.

A sheltered roofed outdoor area had low tables and benches for the children to sit and eat or participate in tabletop activities. A second open roofed area provided an additional space for play in all weather conditions. A mud kitchen, buggies for dolls and a play kitchen with equipment was located under the corrugated roof.

Children also utilised the front outdoor area and choose between bikes, balance bikes, trikes and scooters to participate in energetic races with each other. Road signs were available with stop and go signals for their scooting and cycling.

Toys and play equipment were positioned at an accessible level on open shelving both in the indoor classroom and outside, which nurtured independence, facilitated choice, and encouraged curiosity and spontaneous play. Children's language development was supported through one to one and group discussions, songs and storytelling which were observed during the inspection. A range of books were available in the reading area of the preschool room as well as the outdoor space. A rocking chair was available in the outdoor roofed area for staff to sit and read with children.

Children were observed engaged in tabletop activities such as playing with modelling dough, artwork and jigsaws.

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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 entrance door to the preschool was accessed via two separate gates in front of the premises. The outdoor area was enclosed and secured by a fence to allow staff control access to the outdoor area and prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised. The entrance door to the service was located to the side of the premises and managed by the staff.

Vinyl protective bumpers covered the structural poles in the roofed area in the outdoor play area.

Cleaning products were stored safely on high shelves in the sanitary accommodation out of reach of children.

Infection Control:

Warm water and liquid hand soap were available for hand washing. Paper hand towels were accessible to children from dispensers. The children were supported to wash their hands after outdoor play, before meals and after using the bathroom. Pedal bins were available in the preschool room, sanitary accommodation and outdoor roofed areas for the hygienic disposal of waste.

The preschool rooms were well-ventilated with openable windows. Mechanical ventilation and windows were in place in the sanitary accommodation.

A fridge was available for the storage of children's lunches and perishable foods.

Administration of Medication:

Medication was not required to be administered to any child on the day of inspection. Temperature reducing medication was available in the service if a child presented with a high temperature and was stored safely out of reach of the children. The registered provider informed the inspector that no child attending the service was on specific medication.

Fire Safety:

All fire exits were clear of obstruction. The fire assembly point was located at the front of the premises.

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Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The most recent Garda vetting disclosure presented in respect of one staff member was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting'.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

An updated renewal of the out-of-date Garda Vetting was applied for. Garda Renewal dates have been noted and put up on notice board in the Office.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Copy of the renewal application reviewed by the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions taken and evidence submitted. The non-compliance identified under Regulation 23 remains outstanding until a copy of the processed vetting disclosure has been submitted to the inspectorate.

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 registered provider and staff member were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and were available on the premises during the operational hours of the service.

(2)(a)

A suitably equipped first aid box was located in the service.

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(b)

A first aid box was accessible to adults caring for children in 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 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 written record for the completed fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on 03 June 2026.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The firefighting equipment in the premises were serviced in November 2025. The smoke detection alarms in the premises were serviced on 09 May 2026.

(4)

A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire were positioned at doorways throughout the service.