

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015RN007
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Name of Service:	Castlerea Community Playschool Ltd
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Address of Service:	St Patrick's Street, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon
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Eircode:	F45 PD90
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Name of Registered Provider:	Christina Mannion
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Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	12/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	18	PM	15
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Year's Inspectorate, 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).

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Description of service

This ground floor part time service is in a town of Castlerea, Co. Roscommon. The service is registered to cater for children on a part time basis from 9:00hrs to 14:00hrs, and an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) and sessional care pre-school programmes are offered. The service caters for children aged between 2 to 6 years. The service is registered for a maximum number of 22 pre-school children, at any one time. There are two interconnected playrooms. There is a designated kitchenette for the storage of the children's snacks. A quiet rest area with child size seating and a child sized bed are available for children to rest or opt out of an activity if he/she wishes to do so. There is an outdoor play area to the rear of the premises for children's fresh air, exploration, and play.

Staffing

The registered provider is supernumerary and not on the premises daily. The registered provider employs 5 staff to include the person in charge and the named person to deputise. There were three staff working on the premises on the day of the inspection. The staff hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 to 8, in Early Childhood Care and Education. The staff have documentary evidence of ongoing training and education.

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 Regulations 9, 11, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28 and 29. 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

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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 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

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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 there was a named person available to deputise in the service.

(b) The deputy person in charge was on the premises when the early years inspector arrived. Staff rosters indicated that either the designated person in charge or deputy were available on the premises at all times when the pre-school children were present.

It was advised by the deputy person in charge that one new staff member had commenced in the service since the previous inspection of the service on 11th of June 2025. This staff member's file was reviewed.

Two of the two validated written references were on file for the new staff member and were from a past employer or other source than the past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures were available in respect of the five staff. Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. 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) Not applicable as this staff member had not resided outside the jurisdiction, for six months or more, while over the age of 18 years of age.

(4) The five staff who were working directly with children, held a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI), at a Level 5 to 7, in Early Childhood Care and Education. Copies of qualifications were on file for the staff.

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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.

(4) Subject to paragraph (5), where a registered provider contemporaneously provides-

(a) a sessional pre-school service, and

(b) a full day care service or a part-time day care service, or both, the minimum ratio of adults to children applicable for the duration of the sessional pre-school service in respect of the children attending that service shall be the ratio specified in paragraph (3).

Compliance Information

(1) At all times during the period of the inspection, the person in charge ensured that an adequate number of staff were working directly with the children.

(4) Documentary evidence in the form of attendance records and staff rosters indicated that adult child ratios were adhered to.

On the morning of the inspection, there were 18 pre-school children aged between 3 to 5 years. There were three adults directly caring for these children. The deputy person in charge also assisted in the administration part of the inspection.

On the afternoon of the inspection, there were 15 preschool children aged between 3 to 5 years. There were three adults directly caring for these children.

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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

- The service had a healthy eating policy.
- The parents and guardians provided food for their child's snack times.
- Foods observed on the day consisted of sandwiches with various fillings, roll, rice cakes, crackers, waffles, a selection of fruits to include strawberries, grapes, melon, banana, pear, eggs and yogurt and yogurt drinks.
- The deputy person in charge advised that the children are provided two meals, and one snack- breakfast, snack and lunch.
- The snacks and meals are stored on site in the services designated kitchen.
- Drinks of water were offered for each child's snack time.
- A drinks table is available in the playrooms to allow the children the opportunity to 'self-serve' their drinks.
- Perishable items from children's lunch boxes are stored in a designated fridge, in the kitchen.

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 and the external outdoor play area were secured so that children could not leave the area unsupervised and unauthorised persons could not enter the area.
- Fire doors were unobstructed.
- All cleaning agents were stored inaccessible to the children.
- Leads, cables, and flexes were secured and or inaccessible to prevent any trips or strangulation hazard.
- The playroom temperatures were thermostatically controlled, and maintained between 18°C to 22°C.

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- Thermostatically controlled warm water not exceeding 43°C to facilitate hand washing was available to facilitate hygienic hand washing.
- Heavy equipment and furnishings were anchored appropriately.
- The playroom windows were high and thereby inaccessible to the children.
- All toys and play equipment were observed to be safe and in good condition.
- The staff clearly identified to the early year's inspector, the drop off and collection procedures for children.
- A system was in place to ensure that daily records of attendance were kept for all the children, attending the pre-school.

Administration of Medication:

- There were no medications administered to the children on the day of the inspection.
- The staff demonstrated knowledge of safe practices with regards to the safe storage and administration of medication should it be required.

Fire Safety:

- Emergency exits and routes were observed to be free from obstruction during the inspection.

Outing:

- The service's outdoor area was located a short distance away from the building with access via a laneway. The staff treated the use of the area as an outing. A staff member risk assessed the outdoor area before use on the day of inspection.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. There were low level branches from a large tree in the grassed area of the outdoor area which could pose a risk of injury to a preschool child. It is acknowledged that this area was not utilised on the day of the inspection as the grass required cutting.
2. There was a water play table in the outdoor play area with evidence of rust and flaked paint which could pose a potential safety concern.

Infection Control

3. The lining on the base of sand play area was ripped and could provide difficult to effectively clean. A cover is also required for the sand play area to ensure the sand is protected when not in use.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

The person in charge submitted a written response to the office of the early years inspectorate to state;

1. Immediately following the inspection, the low-level branch on the large tree in the grassed outdoor play area was tied up with some rope, ensuring that it was safe for the children to play in the grass area. It was then cut back to eliminate the risk of injury.
2. Immediately following the inspection, the water play table was removed from use. The rust on the metal legs was thoroughly sanded down, any loose and flaking paint was removed, and the legs were repainted using a suitable, durable paint to restore the equipment to a safe condition. The table was inspected to ensure there were no remaining sharp edges, rust, or peeling paint before being returned to use. And to prevent a recurrence, a regular outdoor safety inspection has been incorporated into health and safety checks. Trees, shrubs, play equipment, and the overall outdoor environment will be routinely monitored for potential hazards, with any identified risks addressed promptly. This ensures the outdoor environment remains safe and compliant.

Infection Control:

3. The damaged lining at the base of the sand play area was removed and replaced with a new, durable lining that can be effectively cleaned and maintained. A cover was also made and is now used to cover the sand play area whenever it is not in use, protecting the sand from contamination by animals, debris, and the weather and to ensure ongoing compliance, the sand play area has been incorporated into the regular health and safety checks. Staff will check the condition of the lining, the cleanliness of the sand, and that the cover is securely in place at the end of each use. Any signs of damage or wear will be addressed promptly to ensure the area remains safe, hygienic, and suitable for children's use.

Supporting documentation submitted

The person in charge submitted photographic evidence of;

General Safety:

1. The secured branch of the tree and the branch cut back on the tree.
2. The sanded and repainted water play table.

Infection Control:

3. The replaced lining on the sand play area and a cover fitted to protect when not in use.

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Summary Comment

The early years inspector has assessed the actions taken and evidence submitted and deems it to address the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.

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 a person trained in first aid response was available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. Two staff members had current training in first aid for children with an expiry date of 23/01/2028 and 05/02/2028.

(2)(a) A first aid box was available in the kitchen stored on a high shelf.

This contained an adequate quantity of first aid items for the numbers of children attending the service at any one time. and was readily available in the event a child required first aid treatment.

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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) Arrangements were in place to record monthly fire drills. The last documented fire drill was dated 28th of May 2026
- (b) A record of the number, type, and maintenance of firefighting equipment in the service was on file, last annual maintenance dated January 2026.
- Records indicated that the last maintenance for the fire and smoke detection system was dated 21st of April 2026.
- (4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed on the walls in the playrooms.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

The service had insurance with an expiry date 27th of March 2027, which was for a part time service for 22 children which included the following: -public liability insurance, insurance against fire and theft, buildings insurance, and insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.

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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 building was of sound and stable structure.

(b) The indoor and outdoor play areas were safe and secure.

(c) There was natural lighting in the preschool rooms with five windows on the outer walls. The rooms were well ventilated by means of the openable windows.

The artificial lighting provided was shatter proof.

The oil-fired central heating system was thermostatically controlled to allow the recommended room temperature of between 18°C and 22°C. Radiator covers were fitted on the radiators.

On the day of inspection, the rooms were maintained between 18°C to 22°C.

The warm water in the sanitary areas was maintained at a safe temperature of 40.2°C

(d) In the preschool rooms, the play and work equipment were clean and in good repair.

Cleaning equipment was safely stored on a high shelf in the preschool rooms and in a press in the kitchen which was in accessible to the preschool children.

From observation, the playrooms were maintained in a clean and hygienic condition.

(e) Adequate and suitable sanitary facilities were provided.

There was a designated children's toilet with a designated children's wash hand basin adjacent to each playroom.

There was one designated adult toilet on the first floor with designated wash hand basin.

A nappy changing area with a nappy changing unit and wash hand basin was provided for children not yet toilet trained off the lobby area.

Liquid soap dispensers and paper hand towels in designated dispensers were within easy access to a pre-school child.

Foot pedal lidded bins and an airtight sealable bin was provided for nappy disposal in the sanitary areas.