

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015WD063				
Name of Service:	Passage East Childcare Initiative				
Address of Service:	Crooke Road, Passage East, Co. Waterford				
Eircode:	X91 D620				
Name of Registered Provider:	Helen Millea				
Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
Date of Inspection:	19/06/2026				
No of pre-school children:	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>14</td> <td>PM</td> <td>7</td> </tr> </table>	AM	14	PM	7
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Community Care Buildings, Cork Road, Waterford.				
Inspection undertaken by:	E Cullen				
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

Passage East Childcare Initiative is a community service based in the village of Passage East in Co. Waterford. The building is purposely built adjacent to the national school. There are two care rooms, staff and children's toilets and a nappy changing area. There is a secure outdoor area at side of the premises. The service is registered to operate from 8:00 to 17:30, 5 days a week for 10 months of the year. It caters for children aged between 2 years and 6 years old and a school aged service is also provided onsite.

The service is currently operating the preschool room only, and the toddler room is closed due to construction works to extend the premises. Children from the toddler room have been temporarily relocated to a nearby community building.

Staffing

There were ten staff employed on the day of the inspection, including the person in charge and participants of community employment schemes. The registered provider does not work directly with the children.

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

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The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9 – Management and Recruitment, 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service, 11– Staffing levels, 16 - Record in relation to pre-school service, 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child, 25 - First Aid and 31 - Notification of incidents. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

A sampling process was used to assess compliance under regulation 16. As a result, the scope of the inspection included time spent in the service.

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.

Additional Information

This inspection was triggered following the submission of a statutory notification of incident by the service

Acknowledgments

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

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Statutory Notices

Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN3281	19/06/2026	A temporary internal door between existing building and the construction site was unsecured.
Status	The registered provider submitted corrective and preventative actions which were accepted by the Early Years 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*

(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.*

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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.

No. 221 of 2016) is amended - in paragraph (4), by the substitution of "paragraphs (5), (6) and (6A)" for "paragraphs (5) and (6)", and (b) by the insertion of the following paragraph after paragraph (6): "

(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:

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- (a) the policies, procedures and statements of the service specified in Schedule 5;
(b) Part VIIA (inserted by section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013 (No. 40 of 2013)) of the Act, and
(c) these Regulations.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b) There was a designated person in charge on the day of inspection and a named person was available to deputise as required.

(2) Through the review of records and discussion with the person in charge, it was identified that two new staff members had commenced employment since the last inspection. These two files were reviewed on this inspection.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) International police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside the state for a period over 6 months.

(4) A certificate of qualification was available on file demonstrating that one of the two new staff members held a qualification at the minimum level 5 and above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(a)(b) The registered provider did not take adequate measures when recruiting two new staff members. Of the four references required, two were not available for one staff member and for a second staff member one reference available was not validated.

(3) The registered provider did not take appropriate measures to ensure that all employees were suitable to work in an early years service prior to their commencement.

(4) From the records available on the day of inspection, it was not evident that one new staff member held the required qualification in early learning and care at the minimum level 5 or equivalent as recognised by the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE).

(7) Corrective and preventative actions submitted by the service in response to non-compliance identified on inspection on 21 January 2026 were not implemented. New staff members were not provided with training on the

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services policies on commencement in the service. In discussion with the person in charge, existing staff members have not had time to review the services policies since the last inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(a)(b) Two references are now in staff members file, validated by registered provider and available for inspection. Going forward, any advertisement for staff will include request that two references are supplied at interview level. The position will not be filled until references are checked, validated by registered provider.

(3) (4) The staff member is no longer in ratio and has sent her qualifications to DCDE to see if her modules match the required for Level 5. If not, she will complete the missing modules over the next couple of months. Before any new member of staff is employed, we will ensure that copies of all Childcare Qualifications are given to interview panel at interview stage and will be then checked insuring they meet the DCDE/Tusla requirements

(7) All staff have now been informed and have read policies. Any new member of staff will be trained on policies on the day of their induction, given a copy of policies to take home and study before commencing employment.

Supporting documentation submitted

References, recruitment policy, communication with DCDE, policy sign off sheets and induction protocol.

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified on implementation.

The findings documented at subsection (4) remain non-compliant, the qualification has not been confirmed as meeting requirements. This regulation will be reviewed on next inspection.

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Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

There were written policies, procedures and statements, as specified in Schedule 5, available for the service. The policies reviewed for this inspection were the following: policy outings, policy on accidents and incidents and the policy on risk management in the service. These policies and procedures were appropriate and specific to the setting. However, while the policies were appropriate they weren't adhered to in all cases. This is reported under regulation 23.

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.

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)(2) On the day of inspection there were adequate numbers of staff were working directly with the children at all times. There were 14 children with 4 staff members directly supervising them during the morning of the inspection and 7 preschool children and 7 school aged children with 3 staff members.

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(8)(a) On review of staff rosters, staff attendance and observation on the day of inspection, there was evidence that two staff members were present during the hours of operation of the service.

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:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;
- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

- (h) A daily record of children attending the service was available and maintained by staff members.
- (i) A staff roster and attendance records were available and reflected the staff members present.
- (k) Records of accidents and incidents were available and completed in detail.

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 kitchenette and staff areas were inaccessible to children. All cleaning agents were stored safely and out of reach of children. Appropriate food reheating practices were observed.

Accident and incident books maintained a record of any incidents, these were completed in detail and signatures confirmed that relevant parents, staff and a manager were informed.

Infection Control:

The service was clean and well maintained with cleaning schedules maintained daily by staff. Children were observed washing their hands before eating, and after toileting. There was warm running water, liquid soap and paper hand towels available for hand washing throughout the service. All perishable food items were refrigerated.

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Safe Sleep:

A sleep area was set up in a section of the classroom; a child was observed to rest during the inspection. Staff detailed how sleep checks are completed when required.

Outing:

The service had an adequate outings policy. Staff members described how high-visibility jackets were worn and how children were paired and supervised during outings. Staff members described the controls measures put in place for future outings.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. See Statutory Notice section in relation to Statutory Notice IAN3281 served.
2. The registered provider had failed to take adequate risk assessment and mitigation measures to manage the ongoing construction in the service. Contrary to the service policy on risk management there was no risk assessment in place to manage the hazards that might arise during construction.

Infection Control:

3. A low-level bed, sheet and blanket observed in use by a child were stored in the staff sanitary accommodation, posing a risk of cross infection.

Outing:

4. The service did not adhere to its outings policy and failed to implement adequate risk management in the planning and implementation of outings as detailed in the following examples:
 - The policy required that risk assessments took place in advance of outings. The inspector found that on an outing in June 2026 during which an incident took place, no risk assessment had been carried out in advance. It is acknowledged that a completed risk assessment was provided to Tusla in the aftermath of the incident which took place during this outing.
 - The policy states, in relation to recording an incident of a missing child, that 'on return the occurrence is recorded as an incident on the incident form'. The incident occurred 16 June, the incident record form was dated 17 June, and the parent signed the form on 18 June. The parent was also not informed in a timely manner on the day of the incident by phone.

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Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

- Gate to grass area has been locked at all times and only opened if a child is being collected or needs to use the toilets, child is accompanied by a staff member. Whether we have builders or not the outside area will be always supervised and access to grass area gate will be locked while children are playing. This also applies to main gate when children are outside playing.

Infection Control:

- The stackable bed and bed sheet and blanket have now been removed from the staff sanitary accommodation and stored in the main room while building is continuing. The stackable bed, blanket and bed sheet will remain in the ECCE room until building is complete and will then be stored with the other ones in a press.

Outing:

- The incident and the delay in reporting it to the parents and delay in writing the incident report has been discussed with all staff. New policy for walks around the area and to the hurling club/ball ally has been implemented and will be followed. A copy of the policy to all staff to study, accept and sign stating they read and understand it.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Risk assessment.

Infection Control:

Photograph

Outing:

Policy

Summary Comment

The actions taken by the registered provider will address the non-compliances identified on implementation. This regulation will be reviewed on next inspection.

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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 two staff members trained in first aid response available to the children attending the early years service.

(2)(a)(b) There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises available for the use of the children attending the early years service.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 31 - Notification of incidents

A registered provider shall notify the Agency in writing within 3 working days of becoming aware of any of the following incidents occurring in the preschool service:

(e) an incident in respect of which a pre-school child attending the service goes missing while attending the service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider demonstrated compliance in notifying the Early Years Inspectorate of an incident that occurred in the service on 16 June 2026.