

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2016WH005
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Name of Service:	Glasson Pre School
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Address of Service:	Glasson, Athlone, Co. Westmeath
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Eircode:	N37 CX61
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Name of Registered Provider:	Lorraine Irwin, Lorraine Nolan
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Service type:	Part Time
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Date of Inspection:	22/04/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	34	PM	14
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla, Child and Family Agency, SAP Office, St. Loman's Campus, Mullingar, Co Westmeath
Inspection undertaken by:	C.O' Connor Hughes
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).

Description of service

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This Early Years' Service provides a part time service operated by private providers. The age range of children enrolled in the service is 2 to 6 years of age. The service operates from 09:00 to 14:00 on a Monday to Friday basis. The service participates in the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme. A school age childcare facility is available.

The service is located in an adapted domestic dwelling in Glasson, Athlone, Co. Westmeath consisting of two pre-school rooms and a kitchen. A third pre-school room is located to the rear of the premises. This room is currently not in operation. An outdoor play area is available for children. A one-way traffic system is in place for the drop off and collection of children.

Staffing

The registered providers employ seven adults. One of the registered providers and four adults were working directly with the children on the 22 April 2026. The registered provider arrived to the service shortly after the inspector's arrival and attended the closing meeting. The second registered provider was not present.

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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Regulation 9- Management and recruitment - (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (3)

Regulation 11 -Staffing levels - (1) (2) (8)(a)

Regulation 16 – Record in Relation to Pre-School Service (1)(h)(i)(j)(k)

Regulation 19- Health, welfare and development of child - (1)(a)

Regulation 21- Equipment and Materials

Regulation 22 – Food and Drink

Regulation 23- Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child

Regulation 25- First aid - (1) (2)(a)(b)

Regulation 26- Fire Safety Measures (1)(2)(3)(4)

Regulation 28 – Insurance

Regulation 32- Complaints (1)

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.*

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The designated person in charge and a named person to deputise were available as required.

(b)

The registered provider arrived shortly after the inspector's arrival and was present for the remainder of the inspection.

The registered provider stated that one new staff member has commenced in the service as a school age childcare assistant in August 2025. The following was noted.

(2)(a)(b)

Two written validated references were available in respect of the new staff member from previous employers.

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(c)

A Garda Vetting disclosure was available in respect of the new staff member. An in date garda vetting disclosure was available for the two adults who required renewal since the last inspection on the 11 November 2024. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d)

Police vetting was not required as the new staff member had not lived outside the state for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(3)

The registered providers ensured vetting procedures were carried out prior to the employment of the new staff member in the service.

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)

The minimum ratio of adults to children was maintained during the inspection.

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(2)

There were thirty-four children attending the service supervised directly by four adults in the morning session. There were fourteen children attending the service until 14:00 supervised by three adults.

(8)(a)

Documentation reviewed indicated that two adults are on the premises during the hours of operation.

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;

(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)

(h)

Details of children's daily attendance was documented in the child attendance record book for pre-school rooms 1 and 2.

(i)

Documentation reviewed indicated that a staff roster was in operation in the service.

(j)

Correct procedures were in place for the administration of medication in the service. One administration of medication form with signed parental consent was available and reviewed.

(k)

Nine accident and incident records were reviewed. Each accident and incident record had details of the accident/incident and were signed by the children's parents or guardians.

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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,

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Children were happily engaged learning through play in the indoor and outdoor environments supported by the staff members. Children were encouraged to be independent as they dressed for outdoor play in their coats. Children enjoyed outdoor play time in the various interest areas. Children enjoyed circle time as they discussed their news with the staff members in room 2. Each child was given the opportunity to speak and praised by the staff members for their contribution. Children enjoyed singing birthday celebrations for their peer and getting their photograph taken. In room 1 children enjoyed free play after a leisurely snack time where children took their time eating and enjoying their food supported by the staff. Children were observed to rest and relax in the cosy area in both rooms.

There was a calm and happy atmosphere in the service. The staff were positive towards children and were familiar with each child and their personalities. Staff used individual names, maintained eye contact and conversed with the children during play activities and at snack time. Good teamwork was observed amongst staff.

Upon discussion with the inspector the staff member demonstrated how the service worked in partnership with parents. A verbal handover is given on collection. Children's photographs of activities and a newsletter are shared with parents via an electronic platform. Artwork is sent home regular on a regular basis. The children's learning journal depicting all their play and work activities and child development observations are shared with parents at the end of the term.

The pre-school rooms were bright and colourful. A range of developmentally appropriate play experiences were available for children. Interest areas included arts and crafts, a home corner, a cosy rest area, dress up and a construction area. Children's artwork "Earth day" and family photographs were displayed.

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The outdoor play area met developmental needs of children attending the service. The Interest areas included wooden huts depicting a shop, doctor and Gardaí. A grassed area that included a mud kitchen and play slides was available to children. A tarmac surface was noted where children could use the scooters, tricycles and bicycles noted in the storage shed.

A group learning journal that depicted the various child play activities was available for review. Links to the local community was noted as the Garda, Paramedic, Gaelic Athletic Association and a veterinary nurse had visited the children in the service.

Evidence indicated that the curriculum planning that supported the Early Childhood Curriculum framework was being implemented.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

A variety of suitable play materials and equipment was available to support children in various types of creative, manipulative, imaginary and free play in the indoor environment and the outdoor environments.

The chairs and tables were child sized suitable to each child's age and development. Equipment was well maintained, durable and easy to clean. Materials including bricks, blocks, cars, tractors, books, art and crafts, jigsaws, musical instruments, dolls, construction toys were accessible to children.

Personal belongings and bags were stored individually for each child.

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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 parents provide healthy snacks for children attending the service. Upon discussion with the inspector the staff member stated that a rolling lunch was in place from 10:30 to 11:00. Children enjoyed sandwiches, crackers, a selection of fruit, vegetables and yoghurts with water to drink. Children were encouraged to drink water and serve themselves from the water station provided in the pre-school rooms.

The service supplies a second snack of various foods to children attending on a part time basis.

Children snacks were stored in the refrigerator which was maintained within the correct limits in pre-school rooms 1 and 2.

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 main entrance to the service was locked and access allowed through a staff member operating the front door thus ensuring there was no unauthorised access to the service. The outdoor play area was safe and secure surrounding by high fencing and a locked gate. The service met the necessary safety requirements in respect of the indoor environment, toys and equipment and the safe storage of cleaning agents.

Infection Control:

The premises were visually clean. All toys and materials were easily cleanable. Natural ventilation was available through openable windows in the pre-school rooms and in the sanitary accommodation. Warm running water, liquid soap and hand towels in a wall mounted dispenser was noted in the main sanitary accommodation. Foot operated pedal bins were available in the sanitary accommodation and in the pre-school rooms for the hygienic disposal of waste. Children washed their hands in the wash hand basins in the pre-school rooms before snacks. An

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infection control policy and procedure in age-appropriate language with pictures was displayed in pre-school room 1.

Administration of Medication:

No medication was given during the inspection. Temperature reducing medication was available if a child presented with a high temperature. Medication was stored safely out of reach of children in the kitchen of the service.

Fire Safety:

The fire emergency exits were free from obstruction in the premises. A fire assembly point was noted in the outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

Outing:

The registered provider stated the service does not undertake outings.

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 providers and one other adult were qualified in First Aid response (FAR) and available on the premises during the hours of operation.

(2)(a)

A fully equipped first aid box was located in pre-school rooms 1 and 2 of the service.

(b)

A first aid box was accessible to adults caring for children in the 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 firefighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.
- (2) The record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection by-
- (a) a parent or guardian of a pre-school child attending or proposing to attend the pre-school service,
 - (b) an employee, and
 - (c) an authorised person.
- (3) A registered provider shall ensure that a record referred to in paragraph (2) is retained for a period of 5 years after its creation
- (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 monthly fire drills was available on the premises. The last fire drill was recorded as taking place on the 4 March 2026.

(b)

A record was available demonstrating the number, type and maintenance of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms on the premises. The smoke alarms and firefighting equipment in the premises were serviced on the 29 August 2025 and 19 April 2026 respectively.

(2)

The fire records were open to inspection to (a)(b)(c).

(3)

Documentation indicated that records in respect of (2) were retained for a period of 5 years.

(4)

A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed in pictorial and written signage in the pre-school rooms 1 and 2 at the front entrance of the service.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was evidence of current insurance cover for the number of children attending the service. The expiry date noted was 27 March 2027.

Part VIII - Notifications and Complaints

Regulation 32 – Complaints

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that the complaints policy of the service specifies-

- (a) the procedure to be followed by a person for the purposes of making a complaint in relation to the service,*
- (b) the manner in which such a complaint shall be dealt with, and*
- (c) the procedures for keeping a person who makes such a complaint informed of the manner in which it is being dealt with.*

Compliance Information

(1)

The service's complaints policy was available and reviewed. The relevant details in respect of (a)(b)(c) were noted in the policy.