

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2021RN002
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Name of Service:	Tir na nÓg Aughrim Kilmore Community Childcare
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Address of Service:	Dangan Community Centre, Kilmore, Carrick on Shannon, Co. Roscommon
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Eircode:	N41 T6K1
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Name of Registered Provider:	Gerry Tiernan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	05/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	22	PM	16
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Tusla Child and Family Agency Government Buildings, Convent Road Roscommon Town
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

Tir na Nog Aughrim Kilmore Community preschool is registered since September 2021. It is based in a community centre in a rural setting and adjacent to the local primary school and church grounds. The service is situated on the outskirts of the village of Aughrim and between the towns of Carrick on Shannon and Elphin. The service operates from 9.20hrs to 17.30hrs and provides sessional, part time day care and full day care to children from two years eight months to five years. The service is in a standalone building and consists of two large preschool rooms, an entrance hallway, a kitchenette, a toy storeroom, cleaning store and sanitary accommodation. An outdoor area with a large poly tunnel is located at the gable end of the building and parking is provided to the front of the building.

Staffing

The registered provider does not work directly with the children and has employed a manager to operate the service. The person in charge facilitated the inspection and there were four additional adults employed in the service with three adults in attendance on the day of the 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

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 registered provider must demonstrate how they have rectified the non-compliance and will prevent any non-

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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 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 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) The designated person in charge was on the premises and facilitated the inspection.

(b) The person in charge was on the premises for the period of the inspection.

Documentary evidence in the form of staff rosters indicated that either the designated person or the deputy person in charge were available, on the premises, when the pre-school children were present.

It was advised by the person in charge that one adult has been employed since the previous inspection of the service which was carried out on 7th of February 2025. This file was reviewed.

The files for the other four staff members were reviewed and were satisfactory on the previous inspection.

(2)(a)(b) Two references on file in respect of the one new staff member were from a past employer or a source other than a past employer.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff and 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) Police vetting was on file for one staff member who had resided outside the jurisdiction, for six months or more, while over the age of 18 years of age.

(4) The five staff hold a Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) at a Level 5 or over, in Early Childhood Care and Education.

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.

(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).

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Compliance Information

(1) On the day of inspection there were twenty-two preschool children present with four staff working directly and supervising these children. The twenty two children were aged between three years 2 months to 5 years and six of these children attended the service's Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) pre-school care programme from 09:30hrs to 12:30hrs with eleven children remaining with four adults until 13:50hrs for the part time session and five children availed of the full day care service with two adults..

(2) Documentary evidence was provided to advise that the adult child ratios were adhered to.

On the morning of the inspection, there were 22 pre-school children aged between 3 years 2 months to 5 years. There were four childcare staff directly caring for these children.

In the afternoon, there were sixteen children aged between 3 years 2 months to five years been cared for by three staff up to 13:50hrs and five children aged between 3 years 2 months to five years from 13:50hrs with two staff directly caring for these children.

(4) Documentary evidence in the form of staff rosters indicated that at least 2 staff were on the premises at all times when the pre-school was operating.

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

- There was a healthy eating policy. There was evidence that the foods consumed were adequate, nutritious, and varied.
- The person in charge advised that healthy eating was promoted within the service by ongoing staff training, visual aids, and adherence to best practice guidelines.
- At 11.00hrs, the children had their snacks provided by parents and guardians, including a selection of fruit, yogurts, and yoghurts drinks. Crackers, rice cakes, and sandwiches/rolls of various fillings to include cheese and meat.
- Hot meals consisting of pasta with cheese and sausage, pasta in a tomato based sauce and pasta with carbonara sauce were delivered to the service at 12:30hrs and were provided by a local catering company.
- The hot foods were probed on arrival to the service.

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- The parents choose the dinners and pre order them for the children.
- The person in charge advised that the children could consume an additional snack if they were attending the full day care service.
- Cutlery, plates, and crockery were offered for children's meal / snack times.
- Clean and safe drinking water was at a low-level and accessible to children in the playroom, the main hall and the polytunnel.

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 door leading into the pre-school facility was secured and remained secured throughout the inspection thus preventing children from exiting and unauthorised persons from entering the premises.
- A substantial quantity of appropriate cleaning products was maintained on-site which children could not access.
- Children were observed to be actively supervised by the adults at all times when playing in the indoor and outdoor environments during the inspection.
- The outdoor play area was securely gated and fenced.
- Toys and play equipment were developmentally appropriate, kept in good repair and did not pose an injury risk to children.
- The kitchenette was inaccessible to the preschool children.

Infection Control:

- The inspector observed that the children washed their hands regularly throughout the inspection to include prior to consuming snack, after toileting and outdoor play.
- The playroom and poly tunnel had cleaning products, and foot operated lidded bins.
- The pre-school room was well ventilated with the windows open throughout the inspection.
- Tabletops were cleaned immediately prior to children's snack break.
- Mouthed toys were removed after use and sterilised appropriately.
- The adults were observed regularly washing their hands including after disposing of tissues into bins.
- Fixtures, fittings and play resources were observed to be in a clean and hygienic condition.

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Administration of Medication:

- There were no medications administered to children on the day. Procedures were in place for the safe administration of medication to children in the event this was required.
- Staff demonstrated appropriate awareness of the relevant safety procedures for the administering medication to children when questioned.

Fire Safety:

- Records on file demonstrated that fire drills were carried out each month which helped to ensure that adults and children were familiar with the procedures in the event of an actual fire.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. The door to the stage in the main hall had no system of security posing a potential access/safety risk.
2. There were stackable chairs stored in the main hall which could pose a potential safety risk.

Infection Control:

3. The children from the seomra beag room stored their full lunch bag in the refrigerator which could pose a risk of cross contamination.
4. Children's snacks that were provided from home including perishable food items such as cheese, and yoghurts were observed to be stored in the main hall with an air temperature recorded at 16.8°C and therefore not kept below 5°C as recommended by the Department of Health and Children. Food and Nutrition Guidelines for Pre-School Service.
5. The pressure of water from the hot water taps in the children's sanitary area was very weak with a temperature reading of 15.8°C which could prove difficult to enable effective handwashing.
6. The large digging area was not covered in the outdoor area which could pose a risk of exposure to animal excrement and infection to a preschool child.

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. A suitable locking mechanism has been purchased and installed on the stage door. The door is now secured when the stage is not in use, preventing unauthorised access by children and removing the identified safety risk.

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- Following the inspection, all stackable chairs were removed from the children's play area and stored safely underneath the stage to eliminate the potential risk straight away. Staff and all relevant community stakeholders who use the hall outside of childcare operating hours have been informed of the importance of storing chairs safely after use. Staff have been instructed to include the main hall as part of the daily operating health and safety checks, It has also been added to the services operating app so staff will check it on a daily basis and mark off its been completed daily. Any chairs left in the hall by external users will be removed and stored safely under the stage before children have access to this area. Community groups have also been reminded via the chairperson of the community centre, the importance of returning chairs to their designated storage area after use.

Infection Control:

- After the inspection, the practice of storing children's full lunch bags in the fridge has stopped. The policy within the policies and procedures on healthy eating has been updated.
The updated policy and procedures manual will be communicated to all parents and staff and will have to be signed off. Children are now asked to come in with their lunches inside labelled sealable bags before refrigeration. Staff have been informed to ensure this procedure is followed daily and to monitor compliance as part of the daily health and safety routine. This practice was implemented with immediate effect to ensure compliance with infection prevention and control requirements in the seomra beag and Fain Spéir room.
- After the inspection a dedicated refrigerator has been purchased and installed for the Faoin Spéir outdoor room, which is kept in the main building. This is to ensure that perishable food items brought from home are stored below 5 degrees Celsius in accordance with the food and nutrition guidelines for preschool services. Children's food is now stored in clearly labelled sealable bags, as per the updated policy for healthy eating policy. Staff have been instructed to refrigerate all lunch items when the children arrive for the day, each morning. The policies and procedures have been updated. Parents will be reminded on a regular basis via our services operating app. The routine will be monitored to ensure compliance with food safety guidelines.
- The hot water system has been reviewed following the inspection. Significant improvement works had previously been completed, including the installation of solar panels, an EDDI machine and a water pressure booster pump, to improve both the hot water availability and water pressure throughout the service. Following the inspection, staff have been instructed that the first staff member on-site each

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morning will activate the hot water system to ensure adequate water temperature is reached before children arrive. This procedure was implemented with immediate effect.

The revised opening procedure has been incorporated into the daily opening routine, and all staff have been informed of their responsibilities. Water temperature will be monitored as part of the daily health and safety checks to ensure warm running water is available to support effective handwashing. The registered provider will continue to review the effectiveness of the existing systems and explore any further improvements that may become available to the premises.

6. After the inspection a heavy-duty, UV resistant rot proof tarpaulin was purchased to cover the digging area when not in use. The cover is securely fastened each evening using the dedicated eyelets using hooks attached to the fence. The cover is securely fastened each evening after the children have finished playing and remains in place overnight to protect the area from contamination by animals and the weather. Staff roll back the tarpaulin each morning and secure it to the fence before the children access the digging area. The daily opening and closing procedures have been updated to include covering and uncovering the digging area. Staff have been informed to the revised procedure and are responsible for ensuring the tarpaulin is securely in place at the end of each day and removed prior to the children use each morning. The area will be monitored as part of the routine environmental safety checks to ensure it remains clean, safe and suitable for children's play.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

The person in charge submitted evidence of

1. The stage door lock installed.
2. Chairs stored safely under the stage.

Infection Control:

3. Dedicated refrigerator installed for Faoin Spéir room. and the updated healthy policy.
4. The booster pump and hot water system.
5. Updated checklist on operating system app.
6. Tarpaulin purchased and Digging area covered.

Summary Comment

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

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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) The service provided evidence that there was a person trained in first aid for children available at all times to the children attending the pre-school service. Three staff had evidence of first aid training.
- (2)(a) In the playroom, there was a first aid box with content items within date, safely stored, easily accessible and stored in a conspicuous position.

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 was available of the monthly fire drills completed in the service.
- The last recorded fire drill was carried out on 22nd of May 2026.
- (b) Records were available in relation to the firefighting equipment with annual service dated 7th of June 2026 and 27th of August 2025 on the smoke and fire detection system.
- (4) Notices were displayed within the service of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire in the premises.

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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

The service's insurance was for a full day care service with an expiry date for the 27th of March 2027 and included the following -

- public liability insurance;
- insurance against fire and theft;
- buildings insurance;
- insurance for outings undertaken as part of the service provision.

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 premises were of sound and stable structure.

The service's exterior walls, roof and foundation appeared to be structurally sound, weather/water-tight, to ensure protection from weather. The interior floor and walls appeared to be well finished, with no evidence of mould.

(b) Exits were clearly identified and visible during service hours. Electrical sockets were safe.

On the day of inspection, the playroom temperatures were 18- 19 °C.

The service had an oil heating system with radiators thermostatically controlled.

(c) There was natural lighting from the windows on the outer walls in the playroom. The playroom was well ventilated by means of the openable windows and doors. The artificial lighting provided was shatter proof.

(d) The service had a cleaning schedule.

(e) There were one designated staff toilet with a wash hand basin.

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There were three toilets and three wash hand basins for children's use.