Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report
Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC268
Name of Service:	Milford Community Pre School
Address of Service:	Scoil Mhuire, Milford, Charleville, Co. Cork
Eircode:	P56 FA00
Name of Registered Provider:	Tina O Connor
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional
Date(s) of Inspection:	11/09/2026

No of pre-school children:	AM	8	PM	N/A

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Second Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick
Inspection undertaken by:	F. Collins
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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Pre School

Description of service

Milford Community Pre-school is a part-time service located in Scoil Mhuire primary school on the outskirts of Milford village in North Cork. The service provides sessional and part-time services to children aged between 2 and 6 years. The service is open from Monday to Friday from 8am to 1pm.

A registered school aged childcare service is also provided from this premises

Staffing

There are five people employed in the service, three of whom work with the children daily. The staff working directly with the pre-school children hold qualifications in Early Childhood Care 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 the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. 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 - 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) The registered provider ensured that there was a person in charge in the service during the operation of the service. On the day of inspection, the person in charge was the registered provider who was onsite when the inspector arrived.

(b) The staff roster indicated there was at all times a named a person in charge or a named deputy onsite.

(2) There were five adults named as being available to work in the service. Of these only one new staff member had commenced since the last inspection, and their staff file was assessed. Garda Vetting renewal was assessed for the remaining four staff.

(a) Of the two references required, one validated reference was available from a past employer.

(b) One validated reference was available from a source other than a past employer.

(c) Up to date Garda Vetting was available on file for each of the five adults named as working in the service.

(d) Police vetting was available for the one new staff member whose service history indicated the need for same.

(4) The new staff member did not require a qualification.

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.

Compliance Information

(1) There were adequate staff working with the children during the operation of the service. There were two staff working directly with the eight children attending the service during the morning session.

(2) Two staff were working directly with the eight children attending the care room. The sign in book indicated that the children that had arrived early to the service for part-time care had adequate staff caring for them.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report
Pre School

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) – (i) The children's records for all eight children in attendance were reviewed and all eight records contained all information as outlined in (a) –(i) above.

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:

(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.

Compliance Information

(k) Seven accident and incident forms were reviewed from the previous school year, all forms were completed indicating the name of the child, their date of birth, the details of the incident, staff signatures and parent/guardian signatures indicating parents were informed of all incidents in the service.

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

Basic Needs:

- The children's needs were met around food and drink provision. Snacks were served at 11.05 am. Drinks of water were available to the children throughout the morning, and the drinks were brought to the table at snack time.
- Children were allowed to go to the toilet independently and those that needed help were helped by one of the staff.
- The temperature of the care room was at 22.1°C at 10.30am. The windows were open to allow for ventilation and ensure the comfort of the children.
- There was a rest area accessible to the children in the care room where children could rest and opt out of activities as they wished. A child was observed to rest, cover themselves with a blanket and watch the activities in the room. A sleep mat was available but was not required as no child required sleep on the day of inspection.

- The children were free to move about and access the equipment independently.

Supporting Relationships:

- The children were supported by the staff at their table top activities and at snack time when a staff member sat at each table and provided support to the children when required.
- The service communicated with parents daily at drop off and collection.
- Each child was supported to participate in their activities, and it was observed when some needed more help this was offered.
- The children knew each of the staff by name and sought their help when needed.

Physical and Material Environment:

- The layout of the indoor environment allowed for the children to be independent when choosing and doing activities. There were areas of interest, and these were grouped so children could play in small and large groups.
- Child height tables were accessible, and the children could sit at these in comfort and participate in colouring, playing with tabletop activities and when eating.
- Gross motor development was encouraged outside when using the hand pedalled sit on toys and when the children were observed running around playing.
- Fine motor development was encouraged through use of arts and crafts, blocks and bricks, and when making jigsaws.
- Sensory play was developed using water play trays and when playing with pinecones and coloured pasta, pretend playing ‘take-out food’.

Programme of Activities:

- The children were observed to participate in a schedule of activities such as free play, outdoor activities and circle time activities. All were to promote the sensory, motor and language development of each child.
- As it was early in the school year the children were observed to be taught how to move their chairs safely and each child got to practice this before snack time.
- There was a language rich environment noted with children encouraged to talk, recite and participate in stories.

Outdoor Environment:

- The outdoor environment consisted of the school yard, and the staff created boundaries for the children to remain within.
- A play kitchen was brought outside for the children to play with and ride on toys were also available to them to share.
- The benches where the children could sit were dried before the children were allowed access to them.

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 doors into the service were secured with electromagnetic locks and no child could leave the premises unattended. No unauthorised adult could gain access to the service from outside.
- The outdoor space was secured by a gate, and staff supervised this area when the children were outside creating boundaries where the children could play.
- The window openings were out of the reach of the children.
- The electric cables were out of reach of the children and were made safe.
- The toys assessed were safe and did not appear to have any pinch or crush points.
- The cleaning equipment was stored out of reach of the children.
- The was no full-length glass door which may cause an injury to a child.
- No hot drinks were consumed by the staff near the children.
- The shelving units that were high were secured to the wall.

Infection Control:

- The food for snack time was stored in the fridge to prevent contamination of the perishable items.
- The bags and coats for the children were stored off the ground on accessible hooks.
- The windows were opened to ensure good air circulation.
- The rubbish was inaccessible, all bins inside were lidded and pedal operated.
- Tables were cleaned with appropriate disinfectant after tabletop activities and before snack time.

- There was hot water in the sinks in the children's toilets and in the care room. The water temperatures recorded in the children's sinks was 32.1 and 34.2°C respectively.
- There was liquid hand soap and paper towels beside the sinks and staff were observed to supervise the children when they were washing their hands.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed to be administered on the day of inspection.

Safe Sleep:

- No child slept in the service on the day of inspection.

Fire Safety:

- The fire exit doors were not blocked.
- The firefighting equipment was safely tethered to the walls for ease of use should they be required.