

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CE067
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Name of Service:	Kincora Kids
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Address of Service:	Knockyclovaun, Killaloe, Co. Clare
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Eircode:	V94 H510
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Name of Registered Provider:	Nollaig O'Sullivan
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection (Day 1):	19/08/2026
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Date of Inspection (Day 2):	20/08/2026
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No of pre-school children (Day 1):	AM	53	PM	48
No of pre-school children (Day 2):	AM	57	PM	57

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate Tusla Child and Family Agency Primary Care Centre Station Road Ennis County Clare.
Inspection undertaken by:	A. McCarthy & J. Hayes
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

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).

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Description of service

Kincora Kids is a community childcare service based in a purpose-built childcare facility on the outskirts of the town of Killaloe in County Clare. The service offers a programme of care and education for children ranging in age from six months to six years on a full day, part time and sessional basis. A school aged childcare service is provided each afternoon and during school holidays. The service operates from 08:00 to 17:30 Monday to Friday throughout the year.

The building accommodates six care rooms, a kitchen and sanitary facilities. A programme of care and education was facilitated in the Jungle room (age range: ten months to two years), the Pirate room (age range: one to three years), the Under the Sea room (school aged children), the Rowan Tree room (age range: three to four years), the Butterfly room (age range: four to five years) and the Rainbow room (age range: two to three years). Enclosed, segregated outdoor play areas, a sensory room and sensory garden were available for use by the children.

Staffing

Fifty adults are employed by the service. The registered provider is a member of the board of management and does not work in the service. On the 19 August 2026, the manager, the twenty adults working directly with the children and five auxiliary adults who prepared and served the meals and drove the bus were present on inspection.

On the 20 August 2026, the manager, the assistant manager, the twenty adults working directly with the children and two auxiliary adults who prepared and served the meals were present on inspection. The adults held qualifications ranging from Level 5 to Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications and had documented evidence of completed continuing professional development.

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:

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

- 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 and safety. The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations:

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment (1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(b)(c)(d) (3) and (4)

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

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

Regulation 29- Premises (b)(d)(e)

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 contents of the report are compiled by the inspectorate body.

Acknowledgments

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

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Statutory Notices		
Notice	Date Served	Detail
Immediate Action Notice IAN 2961	20/08/2026	Evidence of Garda vetting in respect of two Employees who had access to the children on the 19 August 2026 were not available.
Status	Action was taken immediately by the manager once notified and following service of the notice and the manager submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions mitigating the risk which were accepted by the Inspectorate. Copies of the Garda vetting for the two staff have been obtained and sent to the Inspectorate.	
Improvement Notice IN 3041	20/08/2026	Evidence of Garda vetting disclosures in respect of three adults who were not present on inspection were not available.
Status	Action was taken immediately by the manager once notified and following service of the notice and the manager submitted a written response with detailed corrective and preventive actions mitigating the risk which were accepted by the Inspectorate. Copies of the Garda vetting for the three staff have been obtained and sent to the Inspectorate	

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

The manager was the person in charge, and a person was available to deputise in their absence.

(b)

The manager and the deputy were available during the inspection.

(2)

Seventeen files were reviewed in respect of the adults that had commenced employment in the service since the last inspection and garda vetting disclosures were reviewed for fifty adults employed by the service. The findings included the following:

(a)

Twenty-four written and validated references from past employers in respect of the adults working in the service were available.

(b)

Ten written and validated references from a source other than a past employer in respect of adults working in the service were available.

(c)

Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for forty five of the fifty adults employed. However, the service did not adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years in respect of one adult. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(d)

International police vetting with evidence of translation to English was available in respect of one adult working in the service who had lived in another State for a period longer than six months.

(4)

The adults working directly with the children held Early Childhood Care and Education qualifications ranging from Level 5 to Level 9 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Non-Compliance Information

(2)(c)

See Statutory Notice section in relation to Immediate Action Notice IAN 2961 and Improvement Notice IN 3041 served.

(3)

Five employees were allowed access to children in the service without prior consideration of Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of each of the individuals.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

(2)(c)(3)

Once the matter was brought to our attention staff involved were notified, the employees could not attend work until their garda vetting has been obtained and reviewed by the service.

Application for Garda Vetting were submitted to Tusla on the 20th of August. Evidence for the five employees Garda Vetting Disclosure applications have been submitted with the immediate action notice. When the service receives the Garda Vetting disclosures these will be immediately submitted to the Early Years Inspector on receipt.

Going forward Garda Vetting will be completed for all staff before commencement of employment as per our recruitment policy.

Supporting documentation submitted

Garda Vetting disclosures for each of the employees

Summary Comment

Based on the response provided by the service the non-compliances under Regulation 9 (2)(c) and (3) are addressed. The regulatory requirements are met.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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)

During the inspection, an adequate number of adults worked directly with the children in attendance.

(2)

On the 19 August 2026 the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained. Twenty adults cared for the fifty-three children attending in the morning and nineteen adults cared for the forty-eight children in attendance in the afternoon.

On the 20 August 2026 the ratio of adults caring for children was maintained. Twenty-two adults cared for the fifty-seven children attending in the morning and twenty-one adults cared for the fifty-seven children in attendance in the afternoon.

(8)(a)

The staff roster demonstrated that more than two adults were available in the childcare facility at all times.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

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)

Supporting Relationships around Children:

The pre-school children's learning, development and well-being was supported by the adults in five care rooms within the service as follows:

A key person approach was adopted in each care room. The adults interacted with the children in a kind and caring manner. Positive behavioural strategies were used during interactions with the children. The adults responded promptly to the children's cues for assistance and comfort, conversed at their level and listened attentively during conversations. The adults demonstrated an understanding of the children's individual preferences and capabilities. The transitions in the changes of activities and environments in each room were facilitated with ease. The adults notified the children in advance of any change in the programme of activities. The children transitioned from the enriching indoor to the outdoor environment on both inspection days. Opportunities were provided for children to meet their siblings in the outdoor areas during the day. The children initiated open ended child-led play-based activities.

The older children were encouraged to be independent while caring for their personal belongings, using the toilet, participation in tasks and tidy up time. The children's cues for sleep were responded to in a prompt and calm manner during the designated sleep period. The children engaged in open ended creative, pretend and sensory play and dance. Speech sounds and language development was promoted by the adults through repetition, songs and rhymes. The children sat together during mealtime and conversed amicably together in a relaxed and unhurried manner. Individual learning journals were available for the children demonstrating the children's progress and creative work, these are completed each year and sent home to parents/guardians. The service policies and procedures are shared with parents/guardians via the electronic application system, and a hard copy is placed at

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

the entrance to the service. An informal communication approach was observed during interactions with parent/guardians. The adults discuss the children's day and observations with the parent/guardians during drop off and collection in the care rooms. Parent/guardian feedback forms were reviewed; these records detailed positive commentary. A strong ethos of teamwork between the adults in each room was observed during the facilitation of the programme of care and learning.

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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. One garda vetting disclosure was not dated within the previous three years in adherence with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice. It is acknowledged the manager applied for up-to-date garda vetting disclosures in respect of the adult during the inspection.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. A Garda re-vetting Disclosure Application was applied for immediately. Evidence of re-vetting application was shown to the inspector on inspection and is noted in the report. When the service receives the Garda Vetting Disclosure it will be submitted to the Early Years Inspectorate.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Garda Vetting disclosure.

Summary Comment

Based on the service's response and supporting evidence the area of non-compliance under Regulation 23 General Safety is resolved. The regulatory requirement is met.

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

Regulation 29 – Premises

A registered provider shall ensure that the premises of the service are-

- (b) safe and secure,*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

Compliance Information

- (b)
- The service is secured by a key coded, bell operated, and surveillance camera system at the entrance door to monitor the safe entry and exit of the children to and from the childcare facility. The outdoor play areas were secured with fencing and gates to protect the children within. The children's arrival and departure times were recorded on the services electronic application system. Visitors to the service were approved by the manager and recorded in a visitors' book. A completed risk assessment was available demonstrating measures taken by service to reduce risk.
- (d)
- The service was maintained in a clean and hygienic condition. Completed cleaning schedules were in place throughout the premises.
- (e)
- An adequate number of children's and adult's sanitary facilities were available in the service. The service accommodates ten children's toilets, four adult's toilets and four nappy changing areas. The sanitary facilities were equipped with warm running water, liquid soap, hand paper towels and lidded, lined pedal operated bins.