

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL027
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Name of Service:	Colmcille Creche
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Address of Service:	Carrownaffe, Derry Rd, Moville, Co. Donegal
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Eircode:	F93 K093
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Name of Registered Provider:	Orla Doherty
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	04/06/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	16	PM	15
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Donegal Early Years Inspectorate, St. Conal's Campus, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. F92 TD92
Inspection undertaken by:	N Toner
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

Colmcille Crèche is a privately run service located on the outskirts of the town of Moville, Co. Donegal. The service operates from 8.00am-5.30pm each weekday providing both full day and part-time care to children aged 0-6 years. The premises consists of a former detached, single story domestic dwelling which has been adapted for the provision of an early years' service. There are two playrooms namely the baby room and the toddler room. The service has a designated sleep room and a kitchen where meals and snacks for children are prepared. An enclosed outdoor area is provided at the entrance to the building.

Staffing

The service employs six adults, which includes the registered provider who works in the service daily. On the day of inspection there were six adults present in the service. Five were working directly with the children and one adult was assigned to kitchen duties.

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.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11,19,22,23,25 and 26.

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

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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*
- (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.*

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(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) The registered provider ensured the following;

- (a) The designated person in charge was available on the premises throughout the period of inspection.
- (b) On the day of inspection, the person in charge or deputy person in charge was always available on the premises.
- (c) There was a clear governance structure in place with room leaders, deputy manager and a person in charge. On discussion with staff, they appeared aware of their roles and responsibilities.

(2) (a)(b)

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge it was determined that no new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. No files were reviewed as they had been compliant on last inspection in February 2025. Garda vetting for four staff members was requested for review.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for six staff. 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. Please refer to the information outlined under regulation 23 of this report.

(4) Five of the adults in the service evidenced they held a major award at level 5 or above in early childhood care and education on the national qualification framework, or qualifications deemed by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to meet the regulatory requirement.

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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) The registered provider ensured that there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the service.

(2) The registered provider ensured that on the day of inspection, the adult to child ratio was maintained at the minimum specified ratios as follows:

In the morning session

- Toddler Room - Two staff cared for 10 children aged between 2 years of age and 4 years of age.
- Baby Room – Three staff cared for 5 children aged 18 Months to 2 years of age.

In the afternoon session

- Toddler Room - Three staff cared for 10 children aged between 2 years of age and 4 years of age.
- Baby Room – Two staff cared for 4 children aged 18 Months to 2 years of age.

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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, and
- (b) appropriate and suitable care practices are in place in the pre-school service, having regard to the number of children attending the service and the nature of their needs.

Compliance Information

(1)(a)(b)

Basic Needs:

Nappy changing was observed to be an opportunity for positive engagement and interaction with the children which was observed on the day. Staff members used this time for one-to-one engagement with cuddle and laughter while respecting the dignity of the child. The older children who were toileting independently were prompted to do so and supervised from a distance. Morning and afternoon snacks were provided by the service. Snacks included crackers, fruit, cheese, variety of sandwiches and yoghurts. The main meal of the day was provided by the service. The younger children's basic needs were responded to in a prompt manner, noses wiped as required. Hands and faces cleaned after mealtimes and clothes changed if they were soiled, ensuring dignity was promoted.

Supporting Relationships:

Staff members were observed to be respectful, gentle, and kind in their interactions towards the children in their care. During mealtimes the staff members sat at the table and engaged in social conversation with children promoting a relaxed atmosphere. The staff members sat at the children's level when feeding the younger children or when assisting the children to feed themselves. The younger children were held and cuddled as needed throughout the day. Pictures of families displayed on the walls in the care rooms ensured children's connection to home was maintained.

Physical Materials:

The care rooms were laid out to facilitate sensory experiences for the child through arts and crafts and sensory tables including water and sand play. Fine motor development was supported using jigsaws, puzzles and arts and

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crafts. Opportunities for imaginary and role play were provided in the home corner and dress up area as well as construction area and farm animal areas. The toddler room was resourced with equipment suitable to the age and stage of development of the young children, including home corners, construction areas, animals, and musical instruments and soft toys. All equipment was stored on open shelving at children's heights so that choice can be facilitated.

The outdoor play area provided an alternative change of environment for the children. Panoramic views of the ocean and fields gave the area a natural sense of nature. Children were observed moving throughout the different interest areas using gross motor skills on the various structures including a slide, an outdoor kitchen and crafts table outdoor area. The external perimeter of the outdoor area is protected by a wooden fence. The outdoor area had artificial grass ensuring a soft surface for safer rough play.

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

Breakfast time in the service took place between 8am to 9am, this consisted of wheat biscuits, porridge or toast. This is followed by an early dinner to accommodate the sessional children at 11.30am. dinner on the day of inspection was vegetable stew and potatoes. Further light snacks were provided later in the afternoon. The service has an on-site kitchen, and a hot meal is prepared daily for the children. A weekly menu was available and included a variety of meal options. During the inspection, the dinner was observed in both rooms. Children sat together at suitably sized tables and chairs, and staff interacted positively with them throughout the meal. Children were encouraged to feed themselves, with staff offering support where required. All children had access to their drink bottles, which were placed beside them. Snacks provided were healthy in nature, including chopped apples, mixed fruit, rice cakes, and small sandwiches prepared earlier in the day by the chef. Children appeared relaxed and engaged in conversation with each other while eating. Staff reported that the service maintains effective communication with families regarding healthy eating and actively promotes healthy food choices. Children were encouraged to take their time finishing their snack. When finished, they independently put away their plates and returned to play. Drink bottles were stored on an accessible shelf, allowing children to obtain drinks throughout the day as needed.

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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 entrance gate to the outdoor area and door to the service were both observed to be secured when not in use. Wooden fencing throughout the perimeter of the service was well kept, preventing any unauthorised entry or exit.
- The hot water provided at the children's wash hand basins was controlled to a safe temperature below 43°C for hand washing.
- Materials and resources, both indoor and outdoor were all maintained in a good state of repair.
- The kitchen was inaccessible to the children.

Infection Control:

- Tables were observed to be cleaned prior to and after mealtimes.
- Soap was readily available to children to wash their hands prior to eating, after both toileting and nappy changes.
- Child friendly handwashing posters were placed beside the sinks.
- Handwashing was supervised by the adults to ensure all hands were cleaned effectively.

Administration of Medication:

- No medication was given on the day of inspection however on discussion with the staff members they had knowledge on the procedures of medication administration.

Safe Sleep:

- The service had a designated sleep room with appropriate cots and bedding available to children.
- Sleep checks were observed to occur every ten minutes.
- The Sleep room temperature was recorded within the acceptable range of 16 to 20°C.

Fire Safety:

- Fire doors were unobstructed on the day of inspection to ensure safe evacuation in the event of a fire.
- Fire evacuation procedures were clearly displayed in the care rooms.
- Fire extinguishers were on the premises and easily accessible.

Non-Compliance Information

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General Safety:

1. 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 for two adults.
2. A cleaning product was accessible to the children in the baby room; this was immediately brought to the attention of the staff who removed it.
3. A radiator in the toddler room was damaged, with sharp edges around the top which could injure a child.

Infection Control:

4. Suitable and accessible bins were not provided in the sanitary accommodated for storage of used paper towels. Children were observed having to use bins which were in located in the hallway. Bins which are foot/pedal operated should be provided within sanitary accommodation.
5. The walls in the baby room required painting due to the surface of the wall appearing marked, greasy and unclean.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Evidence of garda vetting was submitted to the inspectorate for two adults. A reminder system has been adapted by the service for all garda vetting applications.
2. The cleaning product was removed immediately and placed on a higher shelf so that it was out of reach of the preschool children. Staff have been instructed that no cleaning products are permitted in reach of the preschool children.
3. New radiator covers were purchased and placed over the radiators in the room. The radiator covers are fixed in place in the locations in the preschool.

Infection Control:

4. New bins have been purchased and placed in the sanitary rooms. The new bins are to be kept in the sanitary going forward.
5. A contractor has been booked for August 2026 to complete works.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Evidence of garda vetting submitted to the inspectorate.
2. Photographic evidence submitted.
3. Photographic evidence submitted.

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Infection Control:

4. Photographic evidence submitted.
5. Photographic evidence submitted.

Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider and supporting documentation submitted has adequately addressed the non-compliances in Regulation 23 points 1-4. While it is acknowledged the registered provider has made assurances that work will be completed in relation to point 5 in August 2026. This regulation remains outstanding and will be reviewed on next inspection.

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) Four staff members had up to date first aid responder training (FAR).
- (2) (a) (b) A suitably equipped first aid box was available for the children.

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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 record of fire drills as conducted was maintained in the service. It was noted that the last monthly fire drill was conducted on 02 of June 2026.
- (b) The maintenance record for the firefighting equipment indicated that an annual service was conducted on 01 of December 2025. The maintenance record for the smoke alarm system indicated that a service was last conducted on 04 of February 2026.
- (4) A notice of the procedure to be followed in the event of a fire was wall mounted in all playrooms. A fire assembly point was positioned on the grounds at the side of the building.