

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015GY127
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Name of Service:	Lisheenkyle Community Preschool
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Address of Service:	Lisheenkyle N.S., Oranmore, Co. Galway
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Eircode:	H65 F678
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Name of Registered Provider:	Jennifer McDonnell
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	03/09/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	17	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Quality and Regulation Directorate, Child and Family Agency Unit 2, First Floor, Loughrea Shopping Centre, Athenry Road, Loughrea, Co. Galway. H62 XR82
Inspection undertaken by:	B Lavin
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

Lisheenkyle Community Playgroup opened in 2006. The service is located in Lisheenkyle National School, Oranmore, Co Galway. The service consists of one large playroom and two children's sanitary areas. The service also has access to an indoor hall and a large secure outdoor area to the rear of the building. The childcare service provides sessional care to pre-school children. The pre-school service operates from 9.00am to 12.00pm, Monday to Friday.

Staffing

There are five staff members working in the service. The registered provider does not work in the service on a daily basis.

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 and safety. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

On inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 23. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations within this report.

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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 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.*

(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.

Compliance Information

(1)(a) There was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) During the period of inspection, the person in charge was on the premises and facilitated the inspection.

(2) Following a review of the service files and discussion with the person in charge, it was confirmed that there were five members of staff employed in the service.

(a) There were 8 of the required 10 written and appropriately validated references available from a previous employer.

(b) There were 2 of the required 10 written and validated references from a source other than a previous employer.

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- (c) Garda vetting disclosures were available for all the staff working in the service. The service did not demonstrate compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew garda vetting for staff members every three years. This non-compliance will be outlined in Regulation 23-General Safety.
- (d) Police vetting disclosures were not required as no adult working in the service had lived outside the jurisdiction for a period of over six months.
- (3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) were carried out completely before staff members were appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.
- (4) Five staff working directly with the children had evidence of Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in Early Childhood Care and Education or a recognised equivalent.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 10 - Policies, procedures etc. of pre-school service

A registered provider of a pre-school service shall ensure that the written policies, procedures and statements specified in Schedule 5 are in place for the service.

Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured that the following policies and procedures are in place as per schedule 5 for the service. The policies, procedures and statements were consistent with the service practices.

- (a) Statement of purpose and function
- (c) Administration of medication policy
- (d) Infection control policy
- (l) Healthy eating policy
- (r) Risk management policy

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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.*
- (3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 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) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.*

Compliance Information

- (1) During the period of inspection there were adequate numbers of adults working with the pre-school children attending the service.
- (3) The registered provider ensured that the minimum ratio of adults to children specified was maintained.
- There were 17 children present on a sessional basis aged from 3 years to 4 years old with 5 staff members caring for the children.

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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

Basic needs:

- During the inspection the children ate a snack which consisted of fruit, yogurt, crackers, ham, sandwiches and cheese provided from home, seated at low tables and chairs and supervised by the adults who gave assistance where it was needed and encouraged conversation with the children during mealtime.
- Each child was given enough time to eat and enjoy their snacks without being rushed. The atmosphere during snack time was relaxed, with pleasant social interaction among the children and staff.
- The children had unrestricted access to the toilets and did not have to wait to use the toilet. Children were allowed to take their time during toileting. Staff encouraged and supported children to become more independent in toileting practices.
- The children enjoyed freedom of movement in the preschool room and outdoor area. They were able to explore several different interest areas while outdoors and enjoy the use of the large indoor sports hall.
- In the playroom the children had the opportunity to rest or relax with soft seating in the form of soft cushions, an armchair and rugs in a designated cosy corner area.
- Children were encouraged and supported to manage their own personal care appropriate to their own level of independence and to develop self-help and personal hygiene skills.
- Children had plenty of opportunities to move themselves, to practice and improve their emerging skills, such as co-ordination and balance.

Supporting relationships:

- The service supported the children in forming and sustaining positive relationships with staff.
- The staff were actively involved in children's play, where appropriate initiating games and joining in when invited to by children.

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- The staff behaved in a way that created a positive atmosphere, having frequent social conversations, joint laughter and showing affection.
- The staff listened to the voice of the child as they communicated their needs, thoughts and experiences both verbally and non-verbally, by reading children's cues, gestures and body language.
- Soft tones were used with the children, along with the child's individual name, getting down to their level and making eye contact.
- The atmosphere in the learning environment was encouraging and unhurried.
- Staff guided and supported children who needed more help. Staff used positive strategies to support children's inclusion for example using personal greetings, one to one learning support and giving appropriate encouragement.
- Staff communicated with parents and guardians by sharing knowledge and observations of the child's interests, strengths, developmental and care needs, approaches to learning, changes in their life and any other concerns at drop off and collection times, by phone and by text.
- The staff were observed helping children to find solutions, supporting them and talking to the children in a variety of ways- discussing, questioning, modelling, extending a child's activities and initiating games and activities.
- The service incorporated a daily identified helper system. This child leads on handing out the lunches.

Physical and material environment:

The environment supported each child's learning, development and wellbeing as -

- The playroom was equipped with open shelving units where children could access play equipment and materials independently. There was a variety of play equipment and materials appropriate to the children's age and stage of development.
- The playroom had various interest areas- farm, house, art, train, shop, reading, puzzles, Montessori, sensory trays, garages and dress up. The various interest areas supported learning across all areas of development- fine motor skills, language development, cognitive development, sensory and imaginative development.
- There was enough clear floor space to enable the children to move around unhindered and appropriate furnishings of low-level tables and chairs were available to facilitate mealtimes and table-top activities.

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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.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

Garda vetting was available for five staff members, but the date was greater than three years for one staff member. This vetting disclosure was not in adherence to with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice 'EYI-RN12.3 Renewal of Garda Vetting' to renew garda vetting every three years.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

Garda vetting documents were applied for and are now on file for the staff member. The registered provider will ensure that vetting is kept in date.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

Documentation submitted to the office of the inspectorate.

Summary Comment

The actions and evidence submitted were reviewed and the noncompliance identified under Regulation 23 has been adequately addressed.

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Part VI - Safety

Regulation 27 – Supervision

A registered provider shall ensure that pre-school children attending the service are supervised at all times.

Compliance Information

During the inspection the person in charge and staff ensured that the preschool children were adequately supervised in the indoor and outdoor environments.

The adult child ratio was maintained in each playroom and in the outdoor play area.

It was observed on the day that the staff ensured that children were supervised during mealtimes, in the playroom, in the outdoor play area and while children used the sanitary areas. The staff were observed to supervise children by sound and by sight.