

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015KY036
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Name of Service:	Cumann Iosaef Community Preschool & Afterschool
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Address of Service:	Cumann Iosaef Community Centre & sports Hall, Balloonagh, Tralee, Co. Kerry
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Eircode:	V92 Y336
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Name of Registered Provider:	James Hussey
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date(s) of Inspection:	06/08/2026
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No of pre-school children:	AM	15	PM	13
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Áras an Phobail, Deans Lane, Tralee, Co. Kerry
Inspection undertaken by:	N. Reidy
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

Cumann Iosaef Community Pre-school & Afterschool is a community based early years service that is registered to provide full day care, part-time and sessional care to children aged between 0 and 6 years. The service currently caters for children over the age of 1 year. In addition, the service is registered to provide school aged care. The hours of operation are 8.30 am and 5. 15pm Monday to Friday.

The service operates from the community sports Hall building and from a purpose-built building in the urban area of Tralee, Co. Kerry. There are 2 care rooms in operation namely the Creche room located in the purpose-built building and the pre-school room located in the sports hall building. There is a sensory/quiet room and a designated sleep room located within the creche. There are 2 outdoor play areas designated for the children attending the service, each accessible directly from the respective care rooms.

The children attending the pre-school room have access to an indoor hall at days and times during the week. The hall was not in use during the course of the inspection.

Staffing

Currently there are 16 adults attached to the early years service. This includes 10 adults that are involved in the direct care of the children, 1 cleaner, 3 Community Employment (CE) participants, the registered provider and the centre co-ordinator who do not work directly with the children who attend the setting.

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

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This inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety

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, 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*

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(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 has ensured that there was a designated person in charge and a named person who was able to deputise as required.

(b) The person in charge as well as the deputy person in charge were on the premises on the day of the inspection. The roster for the service demonstrated that at least one of these people were always on site.

(2)

Following a review of previous inspection information, information available on inspection and discussion with the person in charge, it was determined that five new staff members had been employed since the previous inspection. In addition, Garda vetting for four staff member whose disclosures were identified as due for renewal were requested for review. A total of nine files were reviewed. Of the new staff members, one worked with school aged children, two staff members worked on a community employment (C.E) scheme and two staff members worked directly with the children.

(a) There were six written and validated references on file from past employers.

(b) There were four written and validated references on file from a source other than past employers.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for the five new staff members. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years for the four staff members.

(d) Police vetting where required with a certified translation was available for one staff member.

(4) The adults working directly with children held relevant qualifications in Early Childhood Care and Education I 5 or above on the National Qualifications Framework, the two staff members on C. E placement did not require a qualification.

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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.

(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) At the time of inspection, it was observed that there was an adequate number of staff working directly with children.

(2) The minimum ratios were maintained at all times throughout the day.

The required adult to child ratios were observed in each of the care rooms as follows:

Creche

In the morning, there were 3 staff caring for 7 children aged between 1 and 3 years attending on a part-time and full day care basis. In addition, there were 2 adults on a community employment scheme, on a work placement who were not counted in the adult child ratios.

In the afternoon, there were 3 staff caring for 6 children aged between 1 and 3 years attending on a part-time and full day care basis. In addition, there were 2 adults on a community employment scheme, on a work placement who were not counted in the adult child ratios.

Pre-school

1. In the morning, there were 2 staff caring for 8 children aged between 2 years 6 months and 5 years attending on a part-time basis. In the afternoon, there were 2 adults caring for 7 children aged between 3 years and 5 years attending on a part-time basis.

(8)(a) The registered provider did ensure that 2 adults are on the premises during the hours of operation.

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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

Compliance Information

(1)(a)

Basic Needs:

- The playrooms within the service were spacious and provided children the opportunity to move about freely and explore their environment.
- The toys and play materials observed in the playrooms were stored on low level open shelving and on floor. This supported children to readily and independently access them, offering continuous choice.
- Rest areas were provided in each of the playrooms to facilitate children to rest/relax or opt out of an activity as they wanted to. The areas were furnished with for example low level soft seating, cushions and matting.
- The service provides the option of a main meal each day for the children. The parents provide the food for the snack times.
- The main meals are cooked in the designated kitchen in the building where the playroom and the sports hall were located.
- The inspector observed the food provided for snacks included yogurts, crackers and a selection of fruit. The main meal served consisted of Spaghetti Bolognese.
- The children had plenty of time to eat their food in a relaxed unhurried environment.
- There were low level feeding chairs provided for the smaller children in the creche. The chairs were observed in use at the mealtime; the children were then removed from them after eating.
- The children's individual food needs were accommodated as was evidenced with provision of yogurts to the children in the creche who asked for them soon after lunch time.
- The children's toilets were located in each of the 2 playrooms; this allowed the children to use the toilet as they needed with assistance provided by the staff as required.

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- In conversation with the staff in the playrooms and as observed on inspection, nappy changing was carried out at regular intervals and as required in the designated nappy changing facilities located in the creche.

Supporting relationships:

- During the mealtimes the staff sat with the children, promoting social interactions and assisting with feeding as was required.
- In conversation with the staff, they informed of children that were transitioning between the creche and the pre-school room over the past weeks. This was carried out at a quieter time in the service during the summer holiday period, to facilitate a seamless transition for the children.
- The staff were observed to be kind, caring and sensitive to the children's individual needs.
- The staff encouraged the children to interact and to engage with a wide range of materials, activities and equipment, based on the children's own choices, interests and their age and stage of development.
- The staff facilitated opportunities for small and large group activities and play as evidenced for example in the pre-school playing with playdough, shapes, cutters, rolling pins and in the outdoor area playing with sand and on the obstacle course.
- The service provided for and accommodated children's individual and emerging needs for example provision of musical toys freely available on the open shelving, as observed used on inspection
- The children in the creche played outdoors on the rocking horses, on the ride on toys and with the soft balls. The retractable canopy was in use on the day of the inspection to provide shelter from the elements.

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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 playroom doors were maintained secure, preventing children leaving unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised access in.
- The internal door leading from the pre-school room to the indoor hall was secured.
- The cleaning agents observed were stored out of the reach of the children.
- The outdoor play areas were fenced, and the gates were secured to prevent a child gaining unsupervised access to a roadway and to prevent unauthorised access in.
- The alarms on the fire exit doors in the indoor hall were in working order to alert staff if opened by children.

Infection Control:

- The children's toiletries were noted to be individually labelled.
- The sinks observed in use by the adults and children had a supply of thermostatically controlled warm water, liquid hand soap and disposable paper hand towels.
- The linen used for the cots observed on inspection was noted to be clean, dry and individual to each child.
- In conversation with the staff, the inspector was informed that linen is laundered after each use in the laundry facility on site.
- The two standard cots were fitted with waterproof mattresses.
- Handwashing by the children was observed for example before mealtimes and after using the toilet.
- A staff member was observed to carry out nappy changing procedure in a clean and hygienic manner.
- The mechanical ventilation system in the sanitary accommodation in the pre-school room was observed to be on working order.
- The windows in the sanitary accommodation/nappy changing facility in the creche and in the playrooms to ventilate the rooms.

Safe Sleep:

- On inspection there were no children observed sleeping.

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- Templates to record the position, colour, breathing and the air temperature of the sleep room were available.

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. In the outdoor play area serving the creche, there were gaps in the soft matting posing a risk of children tripping and causing injury.
2. There packets of cleaning wipes accessible on the open shelving under the nappy changing unit in the sanitary accommodation serving the creche posing a risk of injury. This non-compliance was found at the last inspection and the corrective action submitted following that inspection failed to prevent recurrence of this non-compliance.

Infection Control:

3. A wet mop stored in a bucket and a sweeping brush, both used in the playroom, were stored in the in the sanitary accommodation in the pre-school posing a risk of cross infection.
4. The seat of one upholstered chair in the rest area in the pre-school room was unclean posing a risk of cross infection.
5. There was a lidded non pedal operated bin in use in the adult toilet upstairs and in the children's toilet cubicle in the pre-school room, posing a risk of cross contamination each time the lid was used to dispose of used paper hand towels.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. The gaps in the outdoor soft matting were filled in with cement and the area has been power washed. The area will be monitored and any gaps will be fixed.
2. The staff were made aware of the non-compliance. Signs were put up in the creche toilets to alert staff that all wipes and creams are to be kept up high to avoid the risk of injury to children.

Infection Control:

3. The mop, bucket and sweeping brush were removed the day after the inspection. They were placed in a storeroom near the kitchen.
4. The chair was removed on the day of the inspection. Any new chairs will be washed to ensure there will be no risk of cross infection.

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5. The bins were replaced with pedal bins.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Photographs of the outdoor matting showing gaps between the square mats filled with concrete.
2. The statement is accepted as evidence.

Infection Control:

3. The statement is accepted as evidence.
4. The statement is accepted as evidence.
5. Photographs of pedal bins in place.

Summary Comment

All documentation received was examined. The requirement for the regulation has been met.

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.

Compliance Information

- (1) There were certifications on file demonstrating that seven staff members attached to the service had current First Aid Responder (FAR) training completed. As evidenced on the staff rosters reviewed, a staff member trained in FAR was on the premises at all times

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.

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Compliance Information

- (1)
- (a) The service had completed monthly fire drills as evidenced on the completed records in the creche. The last recorded fire drill took place on 5 August 2026 in the morning and in the afternoon.
- (b) A record of the maintenance for the firefighting equipment and for the wired smoke alarm was available for inspection. It was recorded that firefighting equipment was serviced on 26 February 2026 and the smoke alarm system was serviced on the 29 April 2026.
- (4) A notice of evacuation procedures in the event of a fire was displayed in the service in both buildings.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

A registered provider shall ensure that the pre-school service is adequately insured.

Compliance Information

Adequate insurance was in place. The service was insured to provide full day care for a maximum of 60 children, and the policy was valid until 27 January 2027.