

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC033
--------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ballincollig Early Years Pre-School
-------------------------	-------------------------------------

<b>Address of Service:</b>	The Village Centre, Station Road, Ballincollig, Cork, Co. Cork
----------------------------	--

<b>Eircode:</b>	P31 XP59
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Gary O'Brien
-------------------------------------	--------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Sessional
----------------------	-----------

<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	04/02/2025
----------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	43	PM	29
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Estuary House, Henry Street, Limerick.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	S O'Brien
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
---------------------------------	-----

### Description of service

Ballincollig Early Years Pre-School is located in a community resource building in Ballincollig town centre. The service caters for children from 2 to 6 years and offers the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programme. The service provides a morning and afternoon sessional care service for children between 8:45am and 11:45am and 12:15pm to 3:15pm, Monday to Friday, 42 weeks of the year. There are three care rooms named the Enchanted Forest, Under the Sea and Outer Space, as well as sanitary facilities, kitchen, offices and staff areas in the service. The service has an enclosed outdoor area adjacent to the premises. The service is operated by a voluntary board of management.

### Staffing

The service employs 12 staff including 9 childcare educators, the cook, and 2 administration staff. The registered provider is not service based. On the day of inspection, 9 staff members worked directly with the children. There was one student on work experience present.

### 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.

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
- (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.

(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 service has a designated person in charge and a named deputy in the service.
- (b) The designated person in charge and the named deputy were on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
- (c) There was a clear management structure within the service and staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

- (2) Recruitment files were available for 9 staff members who worked directly with the children, and the cook, and all 10 files were reviewed. The 2 administration staff had no access to children, and these files were not reviewed.
- (a) Fourteen of the 20 references were available from a past employer and were validated.
- (b) Six of the 20 references were available from a reputable source and were validated.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána for all 10 staff. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.
- (d) Police vetting was not required as no staff member had lived outside of a state for longer than six consecutive months.
- (4) Nine staff members who worked directly with the children held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from Level 5 to Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

### 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) There were adequate staff available to care for the children in attendance in the service.
- (3) On arrival to the morning session, there were 43 children aged between 2 years 6 months and 5 years of age being cared for by 7 staff members. In the afternoon session, there were 29 children being cared for by 7 staff members, therefore, the minimum adult to child ratio was being adhered to.

## 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

(1) A sample of fourteen children’s records were assessed and all forms were completed and contained the required information outlined from (a) to (i).

### 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:*

- (i) details of staff rosters on a daily basis;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

#### Compliance Information

The following records were reviewed:

- (i) Details of a staff roster was available.
- (k) A sample of 12 accident and incident records were assessed, and all were completed correctly with the relevant information.

### 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

- Children were observed washing their hands before snack time.
- The service provided snacks for the children. Some children communicated that they would like more food at snack time and staff gave additional snacks to the children. Snack was a relaxed activity for the children and staff gave the children time to enjoy their food.
- Individual water beakers were easily accessible to the children throughout the day.
- Children were supported by the staff in the Enchanted Room with toileting and toilet training in a kind manner.
- Nappy changing was carried out at regular times and as required during the inspection in the Enchanted Forest and Under the Sea care rooms.

- A cosy area was available in the care rooms and allowed for children to rest and supported the children's well-being. A sensory room was available in the Outer Space care room as an additional space for children to partake in quiet activities.

### Supporting Relationships

- Staff were observed speaking to parents and guardians on collection time in the service. An electronic app was also used as a method of communication with parents and guardians.
- Staff were observed supporting children with putting on their coats and bags at collection time while also supporting independence.
- Staff were observed sitting with the children during snack, in the reading corner and during activities in the care rooms promoting communication skills.
- Staff were observed showing warmth and sensitivity to children who were settling into the Under the Sea room which supported their emotional development.

### Programme of Activities

- In the Enchanted Forest room children were observed:
  - Reading a story and singing songs with the staff in a small group.
  - Children played with magnetic bricks as a tabletop activity.
  - Children played in the kitchen area with the role play materials.
- In the Outer Space room, children were observed:
  - Speaking about any news they had during circle time with the staff.
  - Partaking in small group play with construction bricks and peg boards
  - Playing 'Sleeping Bunnies' game before snack time.
- In the Under the Sea room, children were observed:
  - Children were observed being helpers and tidying their crockery away with the staff at snack time.
  - Playing with a parachute and plastic balls as a physical movement activity.
  - Playing with jigsaws and fine motor activities in small groups.

### 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 doors to the care rooms and the outdoor area were secured and prevented children from exiting unsupervised and any unauthorised access to the service.
- Toys and play equipment were seen to be in good condition.
- Blinds and windows were secured and made safe.
- Cleaning agents were stored safely and out of reach to children on the day of inspection.

##### Infection Control:

- Warm water, soap and paper towels were available to the children and staff for handwashing in the handbasins in the sanitary area and care room. Water temperatures in the hand basins ranged from 36.9°C to 37.5°C.
- Children were observed handwashing following toileting, nappy changes and before meals.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were clear and unobstructed on the day of inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information

##### Infection Control:

1. A nappy and waste bin in the nappy changing and sanitary area were not foot pedal operated therefore posed a risk of cross infection to the children.

#### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

##### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### Infection Control:

1. New foot pedal operated bins have been purchased and placed in the nappy changing and sanitary areas in the service. The registered provider will ensure that all bins will be foot pedal operated going forward.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

##### Infection Control:

1. Photographic evidence was submitted to the inspectorate.

## Summary Comment

The documented and photographic evidence submitted has been reviewed and has met the regulatory requirements.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

*(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.*

*(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) no person other than-*

*(i) pre-school child attending the service,*

*(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,*

*(iii) an employee, or*

*(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and*

*(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.*

## Compliance Information

(1) Attendance books and an electronic application were available for the Enchanted Forest, Outer Space and Under the Sea care rooms and indicated each preschool child attending the service was checked in and out on a daily basis.

(3) (a) (b) The inspector was asked to check in and out on a visitor book which was approved by a staff member on arrival and departure. A staff checking in and out record was available for review. These records were kept in writing on a daily basis.

## Part VI - Safety

### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The registered provider ensured the service was adequately insured and the insurance policy was dated from the 01 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.