

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC040
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Ballygroman Day Care Centre
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Ballygroman Lower, Ovens, Co Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	P31 DK81
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Linda O'Callaghan
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	12/03/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	31	PM	30
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, 13 Market Square, Mallow, Co Cork, P51 DD5Y
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	N O Donoghue and N Reidy
<b>Title:</b>	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).

<b>Conditions if applicable</b>	N/A
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### Description of service

Ballygroman Day Care Centre is a full day care centre that caters for children attending the Early Childhood Care Education Scheme (ECCE) and school going children (SAC). It is registered to provide care to children from 0 to 6 years. The registered hours of operation are 07:30 to 18:00, Monday to Friday. The setting offers a play based pedagogical approach with some Montessori elements in the preschool room. The service is carried out in a detached 2-storey building that was adapted as a childcare service. The service is located adjacent to the registered provider's private residence in a rural area in Lower Ovens, Co Cork. There are three playrooms including the baby room, the preschool room, and the upstairs toddler room. There is a designated sleep room adjacent to the baby room and a second sleep room off the preschool room which is used by the toddlers. There is a large outdoor play area provided to the side of the service divided into three distinct areas.

### Staffing

There are currently 14 staff working directly with the children and 1 student on work placement. The registered provider provides relief cover as needed.

### 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/ supervision/premises. The inspection may also focus on other areas as required.

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulations 9, 11, 19, 23, 25 and 27; however, on inspection additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulation within this report.

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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the registered provider, 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 registered provider had ensured there was a person in charge and a named deputy person in charge assigned to the setting.
  - (b) When the inspection commenced, the designated person in charge was on duty to assist with the inspection process.
  - (c) There is a clear management structure identified in the service with roles and responsibilities of each staff member and unpaid worker. This was identified through the staff rota and on the entrance notice board.
- (2) The staff files of all 16 adults attached to the service were inspected. This included the 14 staff directly working with the children, the student file and the registered provider's file.
- (a) There were 31 references available from a past employer with record of validation on file.
  - (b) There was 1 reference available from a reputable source other than a past employer with a record of validation on file.
  - (c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all staff. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) There was Police vetting on file for 12 adults who resided outside the jurisdiction of Ireland for greater than six consecutive months.

(4) All staff working directly with the children had achieved major awards in Early Childhood Care and Education, as listed on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) with copies of the relevant qualifications on file.

### 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.*

*(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) There was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children at all times.

(3) At the time of inspection, the adult to child ratios were in adherence to the requirements of the regulation. In addition to the staff in each room, the person in charge was acting as a float staff and were available to assist as required and cover staff breaks. The rooms were in operation as follows:

- In the baby room, there were 2 staff working with 5 children aged between 1 to 2 years, all attending full day care.
- In the toddler room, there were 2 staff and 1 student working with 9 children aged 2 to 3 years, 8 children attending full day care and 1 attending part-time hours.
- In the preschool room, there were 3 staff working with 17 children aged 3 to 5 years, 15 attending full day care and 2 attending part-time hours.

(8) The register provider ensured that there were at least two adults on the premises at all times during service hours. This was evident through the staff rota.

### 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) The following was found on the day of inspection through direct observation, review of documents and discussions with the staff:

#### Basic Needs:

- Children's toileting and hygiene needs were attended to regularly throughout the day. Self-toileting was encouraged and staff supported children when needed.
- Children's handwashing was supported and supervised by staff. This was observed prior to meals, after playing outside and after toileting.
- Snacks and hot meals were observed to be served throughout the day with appropriate gaps between each meal.
- Children were encouraged to independently feed themselves and staff provided support when necessary.
- The children in the baby room were each placed in a feeding chair secured with safety harnesses.
- The staff assisted feeding the children and supported the children who could feed themselves.
- The inspector observed the staff giving the children drinks of water in the baby room during the morning.
- Feeding bibs were provided for the children at the mealtime.
- The mealtimes observed were unhurried, the children had ample time to eat and enjoy their food.
- Children had access to their water bottles throughout the day. Each water bottle was clearly labelled, and children were observed freely using their drink bottles.
- Individual child's needs were observed to be supported in the toddler room. One supportive chair with arms was provided to a child who required it. Staff explained this was to aid the child in their development of balance, and gross motor skills.

- The children had free access with movement within the playrooms and the outdoor area.
- Children were observed to develop their gross and fine motor skills while playing outdoors. The gross motor activities included frog jumping, flying like a butterfly and running. The fine motor activities included painting with water and paint brushes, driving miniature cars in the sand and building sandcastles.
- The staff sat on the floor with the children in the baby room playing with and encouraging the children to interact and to engage with a range of materials and toys for example building blocks, practicing pincer grasp activities.
- The children in the baby room were free to choose toys from a large open basket that consisted of toys in a variety of colours, textures, shapes, sizes and sound making.
- The children in the pre-school room were enjoying story time in a large group facilitated by a staff member.

### Supporting relationships:

- Staff were observed to be supporting children's language development by naming colours and numbers throughout their planned activities. This was seen in the toddler room through the planned sensory activity where children were naming colours and pouring them on bubble wrap.
- Children were observed to engage in parallel play both indoors and outdoors.
- Children were allocated roles and responsibilities throughout the day. This was observed in the toddler and pre-school rooms where children had certain 'jobs' such as handing out drink bottles, cleaning tables, turning on music, and handing out lunches. Children were seen to be excited about their jobs and chatting to their friends about them.
- Staff were observed to sit with children throughout the day and chat with them about their activities and or discuss the foods they were eating.

### Physical and material environment:

- On arrival to inspection, it was noted that children's artwork was displayed in the outdoor waiting area. Staff explained the artwork displayed outside incorporates the theme of the week. The theme of the week was St. Patrick's Day theme.
- Staff member explained to inspectors on plans to refurbish the outdoor environment in the coming months to include water walls, painting tiles and mud kitchens.

- There were different areas identified in both the toddler and preschool room such as construction area, sensory area, creativity corner and kitchen area.
- The baby room was spacious for the children to practice co-ordination and balance and for children who were not yet walking to crawl, roll and pull themselves up.
- There was a variety of soft matting and various shaped cushions for children to use.
- The doors in the preschool and toddler room had been painted with black chalk board paint and children had access to mark make on the doors.
- The outdoor area was adjacent to the entrance to the service. This area was large and spacious, it consisted of three distinct area broken up by fencing. The outdoor area consisted of seesaw, tunnels, playhouse, wooden seats and wooden tables. Children were observed freely moving from one activity to the next. Children took part in water sensory activities and staff completed planned activities such as 'What time is it Mr Wolf'. Children were encouraged to choose activities they wanted and had the option to opt out of planned games.
- The outdoor area incorporated a 'Sensory Room' where children would access when they wanted to. Within this room there was a light table, a wall board with locks, keys, switches and doorbells. There was also a chalkboard wall and artificial grass in this room.

### 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

- The hot meals and snacks were provided in the on-site kitchen by the cook for children attending part-time or full day care basis.
- Children attending the sessional service brought snacks from home provided by parents/guardians.
- On the day of inspection, the hot meal observed included mash, carrots and bacon in the baby room, mash, mashed veg and mince in the toddler room and mash, chopped veg and black pudding in the preschool room. Dessert observed included melon in the baby room, fruit and yoghurt in both the toddler and preschool room.
- Additional servings were available to children if they required it.

- The service had supplementary snacks available on site if the child requested more food.
- Children were encouraged to feed themselves, and the textures of the meals were observed to be appropriate of the age/stage of development of the children observed in the care rooms.
- Water was served at the mealtimes and was available throughout the day.

### Non-Compliance Information

1. There was one child attending the pre-school room on a full day care basis that did not have a main hot meal.

### Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

1. The person in charge discussed with the child's parent, who will send in a main hot meal for the child each day.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

1. Photographic evidence of children eating meals was received.

### Summary Comment

All correspondence including photographic evidence was examined. The non-compliance has been rectified, and the requirement has been met.

## 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 cleaning products observed on inspection were stored out of the reach of the children.
- The children's individual barrier creams were stored on a high-level shelf near the nappy changing unit of the children's reach.
- The medications observed in the care rooms were stored out of the reach of the children.
- The emergency exit/fire doors were observed to be unobstructed.
- The storage room was rendered inaccessible to the children.

#### Infection Control:

- The children's individual drinks bottles were labelled.

- There were 3 labelled bottles of milk stored in the fridge in the baby room.
- There were two nappy changing stations serving the baby room. The units, their surrounds and the waterproof mats were clean and intact.
- The staff washed their hands before each nappy change, the children's hands were washed after nappy changing and the staff removed their gloves and apron and washed their hands before returning the children to the care room.
- The children's barrier creams were individually labelled.
- There was a supply of disposable plastic aprons and disposable gloves for nappy changing.
- The staff informed that the linen used for the cots and the stackable beds is individual to each child. It laundered in the service after each use.
- The standard cots shared by the children were identifiable, some of which had waterproof mattress covers and some had individual waterproof mattress covers that were changed and laundered after each use.
- The linen observed on the day of the inspection was clean and dry.
- Hand washing by the children took place under the supervision of the adults prior to mealtimes and after using the toilet.
- The staff reminded children from the pre-school room who came in from outdoor play time to wash their hands after using the toilet.
- The potty in place in the pre-school toilet was clean and dry.
- The toys and play materials were observed to be in a clean condition and records were maintained for them.
- The windows were open in the care rooms and sanitary accommodation to ventilate the rooms.
- The mechanical ventilation in the sanitary accommodation was observed to be in working order.

### Administration of Medication:

- The staff informed the inspectors that no children attending the baby, toddler and pre-school room were in receipt of medication.
- The medication observed in the service was clearly labelled and in their original containers.

### Safe Sleep:

- The inspectors observed the staff conducted 10-minute physical sleep checks on children who slept in both sleep room on inspection with a written record of the child's position, breathing and colour was maintained.

- A staff member remained in the sleep room in the baby room whilst settling a child to sleep. The staff member cuddled the child in her arms whilst speaking to the child in a kind and comforting manner.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

- The leg of the construction table in the toddler room was broken. This may pose a risk of injury to the child

#### Infection Control:

- It was observed in the toddler room that the tables were not cleaned down after an activity prior to mealtime. This may lead to a risk of infection.
- One child chair in the toddler room was noted to have torn material exposed and therefore was not easily cleanable. This poses a risk of cross infection and cross contamination.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

- The person in charge ensured that the construction table was removed from the room. A new template for reviewing equipment has been completed.

#### Infection Control:

- The person in charge has assured that staff have been re-retrained in infection control and their policy has been updated and reviewed by all staff.
- The chair has been removed and a new chair placed into the room. A template for reviewing equipment was completed.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General Safety:

- Person in charge provided photographic evidence of the construction table removed from the room.

#### Infection Control:

- The infection control policy was updated and reviewed; photographic evidence was provided.
- Photographic evidence was submitted ensuring chairs were replaced.

### Summary Comment

All correspondence including photographic evidence was examined. The non-compliance has been rectified, and the requirement 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.*

*(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) There was an adequate number of staff members trained in First Aid Responder (FAR). The staff roster demonstrated that at least one staff member with FAR was available on the premises at all times.

(2)

(a) First aid kits were stored up high, out of reach of children and clearly identified in each of the three care rooms.

The three first aid kits in each room were inspected and all were suitably stocked. These were available for staff to attend to the children if required.

### 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

It was evident throughout the day that children are supervised at all times, this was observed by staff engaging in supervision by sight and sound. This was observed both indoors and outdoors, staff supported children when required.

### Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements

#### Regulation 29 - Premises

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

*(d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*

*(e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

## Compliance Information

(e) The service had adequate and suitable sanitary facilities available in each room for the number of children attending. The baby room had two nappy changing units, changing mats and hand wash basins available for the children and staff. There was adequate storage for nappy, gloves, aprons and spare clothes for each child.

## Non-Compliance Information

(d) There was black staining on an area of the wall and ceiling in the adult bathroom located next to the preschool room.

## Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

### Corrective and Preventive Action

The person in charge ensured that correct ventilation will be monitored in the sanitary facility and regular checks and cleaning checks will be maintained going forward.

### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the wall and ceiling was provided.

## Summary Comment

All correspondence including photographic evidence was examined. The non-compliance has been rectified, and the requirement has been met.