

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC047				
<b>Name of Service:</b>	Banteer Community Childcare Services CLG				
<b>Address of Service:</b>	Clonmeen, Banteer, Co Cork				
<b>Eircode:</b>	P51 R884				
<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Marie Fenlon				
<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional				
<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	22/04/2025				
<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AM</td> <td>66</td> <td>PM</td> <td>57</td> </tr> </table>	AM	66	PM	57
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<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	13 Market Square Mallow Co. Cork P51DD5Y				
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	B Fraher and S O Brien				
<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).

**Conditions if applicable** N/A

### Description of service

Banteer Community Childcare Service CLG is a community-based service, offering a choice of full day care, part-time and sessional, facilitating the Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) scheme in the morning. A school age service is also offered. The service operates Monday to Thursday between the hours of 7:00 and 18:30 and Friday from 7:00 to 15:00, for 49 weeks of the year and is registered for children aged from 0 to 6 years of age. The service is located in a residential area in the rural village of Banteer in North Cork. It operates from a single storey building purposefully built as a childcare facility. There are four care rooms located within the main building, Daisy room, Daffodil room, Sunflower room and Lily room. There are also four outdoor structures consisting of two wooden cabins, Bluebell Pre-school and Naíonra Poipin, and two modular units, Naíonra Fiúise and Cactus. There is a large reception area, offices and a kitchen located within the service. The large outdoor play area has dedicated secure outdoor play areas for each age group and each care room is timetabled for play in the additional outdoor space. There are adults and child sanitary facilities in both the outdoor and indoor areas. A staff room is located adjacent to the Bluebell Pre-school room. There is a large car park area located in front of the service. A school age service is also in operation.

### Staffing

There are 37 staff employed in the service and 1 of these staff is a participant on the Community Employment Scheme. On the day of inspection, 26 staff were present, which included 2 administration staff, 3 staff carrying out kitchen and cleaning duties and a maintenance person. A student on work placement was also present. The registered provider does not work directly in the service. Two staff on the day of inspection were assigned to the afterschool care service.

### 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 inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the children, person in charge and staff 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 had a designated person in charge and four named persons who were able to deputise if needed.
  - (b) The designated person in charge was not present during the inspection. The four named persons were on the premises for the duration of the inspection.
  - (c) There was a clear management structure in the service and all staff were aware of their roles and responsibilities.

(2) Thirty-seven staff member files were reviewed. The file of the student on work placement was also reviewed.

(a) Fifty one of the 76 references were from a past employer and were validated.

(b) Twenty five of the 76 references were from another source other than a past employer and were validated.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 37 staff members and the student on work placement. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Police vetting disclosures had been obtained for two staff members who had lived outside of the state for longer than six consecutive months.

(4) Twenty nine of the 37 staff members worked directly with the children and held a relevant qualification in Early Childhood Care and Education from level 5 to level 8 on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed equivalent by the Minister. The remaining eight staff members that did not hold relevant qualifications were employed as cooks, cleaners, maintenance, office administration and in school age childcare.

## 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 following policies were reviewed and were found to meet the necessary requirements:

- Policy on healthy eating.
- Policy on infection control, named in the service as three separate policies, sickness/ illness exclusion policy, hand hygiene policy and nappy changing and toileting policy.

### 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 the inspection, there was adequate adults responsible for the direct care and supervision of the children.

(2) The adult/ child ratios were observed to meet the minimum requirement, and above in some care rooms during the inspection. The ratios were as follows:

- The Daisy room had seven children being cared for by three staff in the morning and eight children being cared for by two staff in the afternoon.
- The Daffodil room had 13 children being cared for by 4 staff and 1 student in the morning and 13 children being cared for by 4 staff in the afternoon.
- The Sunflower room had 11 children being cared for by 2 staff in the morning and 6 children being cared for by 1 staff member and 1 student in the afternoon.
- The Cactus room had five children being cared for by two staff in the morning and the room was not in use in the afternoon.
- The Naíonra Popín room had 17 children being cared for by 3 staff in the morning and 17 children being cared for by 4 staff in the afternoon.
- The Bluebell pre-school had 12 children being cared for by 3 staff and 1 unpaid worker in the morning and 13 children being cared for by 3 staff and 1 unpaid worker in the afternoon.

- On the day of inspection, the Lily room was not in use and the Naíonra Fiúise room was used for the afterschool service.

(8)

- (a) On the day of inspection, the service operated with at least two adults present at all times while early years children were present.

### 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) Twenty-four children's records were reviewed, and all contained the relevant information outlined above 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;*
- (j) details of any medication administered to a pre-school child attending the service with signed parental consent;*
- (k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

#### Compliance Information

(1) The following records were reviewed and assessed during the inspection:

- (i) The staff roster was available and clearly outlined the start, finish and break times of the staff.
- (j) Nineteen administrations of medication records were reviewed and completed with the relevant information needed.
- (k) Thirty-one accident and incident records were assessed and were completed with the relevant information needed.

## 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

(1)(a)

**Basic needs:**

- Nappy changing was observed to be carried out throughout the day and as required by each child. Nappy changing was observed in the Daisy room to be respectful, and staff and children were observed to be chatting.
- Children had unrestricted access to the toilets and were observed to access the sanitary facilities independently with the supervision of staff.
- The individual sleep needs of the young children were met, and this was observed on the day by children sleeping at various intervals in the Daisy room and after lunch in the Daffodil room.
- Outdoor play was observed during the inspection. Children were observed to dress appropriately for outdoors wearing coats and hats. Children's independence was encouraged in putting on and taking off outdoor clothing with staff at hand to help if needed.
- It was observed that water was available to the children throughout the day in the care rooms during the inspection.
- Individual care plans were available for children that required them. It was observed that staff were aware of the individual needs of the children and supported the learning and development of each child.

### Supporting relationships:

- During mealtimes, the adult remained with the children and assisted as required. The children were afforded sufficient time to enjoy the food in a relaxed atmosphere and staff conversed with children at the tables.
- Children had the opportunity to feed themselves appropriate to the ages and stages of development along with the staff sitting at the child's level and assisting also if needed.
- Spare clothing was available for children if required. A staff member in the Daffodil room was observed dealing with a child who had wet clothing in a sensitive and caring manner.
- The staff in all care rooms were observed to be kind and caring towards the needs of the children in their care. An example of this was when a child was crying in the Daffodil room, a staff member immediately comforted the child.
- The inspector observed positive and playful interactions between the staff and children. For example, the staff were singing and reading stories with the children. Staff engaged with the children during artwork, when completing puzzles and during imaginative play.
- Family pictures were evident on the walls and staff stated that they communicated with the parents through a software technology application to provide information in relation to updates on the children's day at the service or at drop off or pick up.

- The staff promoted positive behaviour among children encouraging them to take turns, say please and using low tones as seen in the indoor and outdoor area in each care room assessed.

### Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

#### Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

*(1) Subject to this regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that-*

*(a) having regard to the number of pre-school children attending the service, their respective ages and the amount of time they spend on the premises, there are adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and, where required by these Regulations, outdoors, during the day, and*

*(b) there are adequate and suitable facilities for a pre-school child to rest during the day, and in the case of an overnight pre-school service, during the day and the night.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

(a) The children had access to both indoor and outdoor environments during the day. Six care rooms were in use during the morning of inspection and five in the afternoon. There were well defined interest areas for the children in each care room. Materials such as puzzles, arts and crafts, connectable shapes, dress up outfits, doll houses, play kitchens and construction toys promoted exploration and learning through various types of play.

The care rooms were resourced with age-appropriate equipment, which was readily available to children on low set open shelving.

The outdoor environment was to the rear and side of the main building and around the prefabricated structures and cabins. It had grass and a shock absorbing surface. The area had a large selection of age-appropriate toys such as ride on toys, slides, playhouses, climbing areas, a sand pit and a grass area with goalposts.

(b) All the care rooms observed on inspection were equipped with suitable rest facilities.

The Daisy room had two sleep rooms adjacent to the main care room. One room had six cots, and the other room had five cots. The cots were placed at least 50cm apart and all had waterproof protected mattresses. The inspector observed children sleeping with the room dimmed by closing blinds.

The Daffodil room was observed to use floor beds and floor mats for sleeping. Individual fitted sheets were used by each child and stored in individual bags with the child's name on it. Children slept with cellular blankets. All the care rooms observed also had rest areas furnished with low sofas, cushions and access to blankets if needed. The staff in the Cactus room informed the inspector that children requiring sleep can access other care rooms in the main building to sleep if required.

### 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

- Two daily hot meals were offered to children who attended full day care, lunch and afternoon tea which were delivered by a registered catering company to the service. On the day of inspection, examples of the hot food served were chicken curry, carrots, turnip and rice and the planned afternoon tea was soup and crispy bread rolls. The inspector was advised that specific dietary requirements of the children can be accommodated by the catering company.
- The children’s snacks for mid-morning and afternoon were supplied by their parents or guardians. On the day of inspection examples included sandwiches, crackers, yogurt, rice cakes and fruit such as bananas, oranges and strawberries. All the food was observed to be healthy and nutritious.
- The deputy in charge informed the inspector that breakfast consisted of cereal and toast with milk or water and this was provided by the service.
- Suitable cutlery was provided in each care room along with appropriate seating in the form of suitable tables and low-level chairs.
- A water station was available in the care rooms inspected and drinking water was available throughout the day and children were observed to be offered milk also. Children in the Bluebell pre-school were observed to pour their own drinks from a jug at mealtimes.
- A child in the Bluebell room was observed to be offered snacks outside of snack time when the child requested these.
- A menu was available to review and indicated a variety of meal provisions throughout the week. The deputy in charge informed the inspector that the service has a rotating four-week menu.

## 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:

- On the day of inspection, the door was appropriately secured on arrival to the premises and entry was gained by keypad. This restricted unauthorised access into the building and helped to prevent the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- During the inspection, toys and play equipment assessed were observed to be in good condition.
- All cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children on inspection.
- The outdoor area was observed to be secured with metal fencing and within the yard individual play areas could be closed off with a bolted gate.
- First aid boxes were kept out of reach to children and were accessible to staff when needed.
- The windows in the care room were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.

##### Infection control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap and paper towels. Hand air dryers were also available. Children were observed to wash their hands before snack and after using the toilet. Staff were observed to remind children to do so.
- Lidded, foot pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste during the inspection.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground on wall hooks to be prevent cross infection.
- Perishable foods were stored in the refrigerator to prevent food spoilage.
- Disposable gloves and aprons were provided for adults when attending to the children's nappy changing and they were observed to be used.
- Soothers were cleaned in a sterilising solution if required during the inspection.
- Children's individual bed sheets were laundered once a week or more often if necessary.

##### Administration of medication:

- The person in charge informed the inspector that no regular medicine was being administered to a child currently in the service.

- Temperature reducing medicines were stored out of reach of the children and the observed medicine were in date.

### Safe sleep:

- The air temperature in the two designated sleep rooms off the Daisy room were recorded between 20.3°C and 20.5°C and the Daffodil room had a temperature of 20.5°C while the children were sleeping.
- Staff remained with the children who were asleep in the Daffodil care room on floor beds.
- Staff in both the Daisy room and the Daffodil room were noted to maintain sleep records in relation to the children's colour, breathing and position at 10-minute intervals. The sleep records of 11 children were reviewed and were found to be recorded correctly.

### Fire safety:

- The fire exit doors were free from obstruction on inspection.
- Fire extinguishers were wall mounted.

### Outing:

- No outings were conducted on the day of inspection. The person in charge informed the inspector that a yearly outing occurred for the pre-school children from the service and a risk assessment was completed prior to this.

## Non-Compliance Information

### General safety:

1. The inspector noted that the water temperature in the two sinks in the Daisy room nappy changing area ranged from 45.8°C to 46.3°C and three sinks in the Daffodil room ranged from 46.2°C to 46.6°C. This posed a scalding risk to the children as the water temperature is above 43°C. It is acknowledged that, when brought to the attention of the Deputy, maintenance was contacted, and the water temperature was reduced to below 43°C.

### Infection control:

2. During the nappy changing procedure in the Daisy room, the inspector observed that a child's hands were not washed after. This was at variance with the services nappy changing policy which stated that a child's hands were washed after a nappy change, and this posed a cross-infection risk to the children and staff.
3. A staff member in the Naíonra Poipín room informed the inspector that nappy changing was carried out at regular intervals. The bin used in the nappy changing area was not foot pedal operated. This posed an infection control risk to the children and staff.

### Administration of medication:

- The inspector observed that emergency medicine in the Sunflower room that may be required by a child had an expiry date of September 2024. Expired medicine posed a risk to the child should it be needed in an emergency.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was made by the registered provider:

### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General safety:

- Maintenance had adjusted the thermostat to reduce the temperature of the water. This is recorded on a weekly water temperature check. A plumber is booked to install a stand-alone pump in the kitchen to ensure all the rooms have water maintained at the correct temperatures.

#### Infection control:

- The services policy on nappy changing and hand hygiene was circulated to all the team and discussed at the team meeting. The service plans to have more frequent reminders of the policies and procedures and carry out spot checks.
- A foot pedal operated bin has been purchased. The service put a reporting procedure in place for items needed or to be replaced in the care rooms. Staff have been encouraged to familiarise themselves with the QRF and the service hopes to give staff more time to engage with these resources.

### Administration of medication:

- The service has obtained in date medication from the parents and will ensure to return out of date medicine and obtain an in-date supply in the future. A check list has been introduced in the service to check medication.

### Supporting documentation submitted

#### General safety:

- A copy of a weekly temperature record check was received in the office of the inspectorate.

#### Infection control:

- A copy of the agenda for the team meeting was received.
- A photograph of the pedal operated bin was received.

### Administration of medication:

- A photograph of the new medication was received.

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report Pre School

## Summary Comment

The corrective actions submitted by the registered provider have addressed the non-compliances identified under Regulation 23.