

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CC066
--------------------------	-------------

Name of Service:	Bright Beginnings
-------------------------	-------------------

Address of Service:	Caheragh, Drimoleague, Co. Cork
----------------------------	---------------------------------

Eircode:	P47 FN27
-----------------	----------

Name of Registered Provider:	Celeste Shorten
-------------------------------------	-----------------

Service type:	Full Day
----------------------	----------

Dates of Inspection:	29/08/2023
	04/09/2023

No of pre-school children:	AM	29	PM	21
		27		17

Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Early Years Inspectorate, Social Work Dept, Hospital Grounds, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen, West Cork P81 PD78
Inspection undertaken by:	M Carney
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).

Conditions if applicable	Not Applicable
---------------------------------	----------------

Description of service

Bright Beginnings is a community based early years service which is registered to cater for children aged 0 to 6 years on a sessional, part time and full day care basis.

It operates from 08:00am to 18 :00pm daily.

The service is situated in a purpose built, single storey detached property, nestled behind a village church in rural west Cork. The setting provides 2 care rooms, toilet and nappy changing facilities, a sleep room, kitchen and staff room and a staff office. The children have access to multiple outdoor play spaces.

There is sufficient off-street car parking for the children to arrive and depart safely from the service with their families.

Staffing

As this is a community service the registered provider acts in a voluntary position and does not work directly with the children. There are 12 adults employed in the service in total, each having attained Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in a childcare course, ranging from Level 5 to Level 8.

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

The inspection was unannounced and focused on the area of governance/ health, welfare and development of child/ safety/ premises and facilities. The inspections 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.

Additional Information

An Immediate Action Notice (IAN) was issued on the 05 September in relation to Safety: On the 29 August there was an absence of an adult on the premises with First Aid Responder training (FAR).

The manager reverted within the timeframe and provided information to address the non-compliance, details of which are described in the report under Regulation 25 – First Aid.

Acknowledgements:

The inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the manager, staff and children who were present on the day.

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.

(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

(2)(a) & (b)

There were 13 adults in total attached to the service, each file was examined and the following information was obtained –

There were 25 written past employer references available with records of validation attached.

There was 1 written reference from a source that the registered provider considered reputable. A record of validation was attached.

(c)

There were 13 up to date Garda vetting disclosures on file.

(d)
Police vetting was available for the 3 staff members who had worked or lived outside the jurisdiction of Ireland for a period of 6 consecutive months.

(4)
Quality Qualifications Ireland (QQI) in childcare training were on file for each staff member ranging from Level 5 to Level 8.

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(a) & (b)
The registered provider had appointed a manager to operate the service, but on the day of the initial inspection 29 August, the manager was on leave and there was some ambiguity who the designated deputy was and their role in order to facilitate the inspection process.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation

The manager stated that a clear line of governance is now in place and information regarding the person in charge of the service is displayed and designated staff are familiar with their job roles.

A policy and displayed poster were submitted to evidence this new process.

Summary Comment

Documents to evidence that the non-compliance has been suitably addressed was submitted to the early years office, it was reviewed and found to meet the Requirements of the non-compliant section of Regulation 9 (1) (a) &(b).

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.

Compliance Information

- (1)
On the 29 August and the 01 September there was an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.
- (2)
On the 29 August there were 8 children aged from 15 months to 2 years attending the creche on a full day care basis with 2 adults in attendance.
On the 01 September there were 7 children attending the creche on a full day care basis, with 2 adults in attendance.
On the 29 August there were 21 children attending the playschool aged from 2.5 to 5 years, 9 of which were attending on a part time and full day care basis. There were 5 children attending the afternoon session with 3 adults in attendance.
On the 01 September there were 20 children attending the playschool on a sessional basis. There were 11 registered to attend on a full day care basis. There were 3 adults in attendance and an additional adult available to provide cover.
The adult child ratios were correct.

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)

Each of the children’s enrolment forms were reviewed, and the following were found to be compliant –

(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (g), (h), (i).

Non-Compliance Information

(1)(f)

On review of the enrolment forms it was found that a record was not completely maintained in relation to details of any illness, allergy or special needs of a child, together with all information relevant to the provision of special care or attention.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

The manager stated that an inclusive policy is in place to ensure that each children's needs are met. More importantly, the staff members have been trained in respect of communicating with parents about their children's individual needs and maintaining records in partnership with agencies and families.

Summary Comment

Documentation in the form of policies and staff training records were submitted, they were reviewed and found to evidence that the non-compliance had been addressed.

The Requirement has been met.

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:

- (h) details of attendance by each pre-school child on a daily basis;*
- (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.*

(3) A record referred to in paragraph (1) shall be open to inspection on the premises, and the documents and records referred to in paragraph (2)(a) shall be open to inspection whether on the premises or elsewhere, by an authorised person.

Compliance Information

(1)(h)

The service maintained a register and templates to record each child's daily attendance.

(j)

The service used a logbook for the recording of medications that had been developed by an agency allied to childcare provision. On inspection it was found that the correct information had been recorded in respect of medications administered to the children. The most recent entry was dated 27 February 2023.

(k)

The service had a record book to detail any accidents or incidents that had occurred in the service. There were no entries recorded in the new book.

Non-Compliance Information

(3)

Documents relating to staff references and Garda vetting details were not available for inspection on the 29 August 2023.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Documentation Submitted

The manager stated a system is now in place to ensure that staff records will be available for inspection and designated deputies have been made aware of this new practice.

A policy was submitted to support the above.

Summary Comment

The Requirement has been met.

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 of the Children:

- The parents and guardians supplied their children with all their meal and snack requirements whilst attending the service.
- Meals were offered in a timely manner.
- Meals were eaten in the care rooms; in the creche highchairs were arranged sociably around the low table and chairs. A staff member entertained the children, singing songs and providing jaunty movements whilst they waited for their meals.
- Children attending the playschool were observed eating in an unhurried manner, being assisted by the adults and enjoying the event.
- Single use bibs were used for younger children to protect clothes whilst eating.
- Toileting was supervised by staff members and children encouraged to independently wash hands, flush toilets and dispose of paper towels.
- Nappy changing was carried out in a flexible manner.
- Child height hooks and storage shelving was available in the playschool to encourage independent dressing and organisation of their personal belongings.
- Rest areas were available to the children in both the creche and playschool to allow the children to opt out play activities and relax if they so wished.
- The children had direct access to a multiple outdoor play areas which were secured and suitably equipped with a wide range of gross motor skill play opportunities.

Physical and Material Environment –

- Bright Beginnings occupied a modern, purpose-built single storey building which was set back off the road nestled in mature gardens behind the rural village church.
- It provided 2 care rooms were found to be well maintained, airy and bright. The rooms had openable windows that allowed for that allowed for natural light and ventilation. In addition, air filters were available in each room to manage ambient room temperatures during hotter weather.
- Each room was suitably furnished with child sized tables and chairs, highchairs, and low chairs.
- The rooms were suitably furnished with open shelving, mobile cabinets and box storage units to store and display, and to allow the children easy access to the wide range of play materials and equipment.
- The creche had a cordoned area for younger children so that they could explore their environment in a safe way and avail of the age-appropriate equipment such as, pull along toys, sound making materials and construction.
- The playschool was laid out in a thematic manner. There was a wide range of tabletop activities and games to encourage companionable interaction, there were cars and trucks, a home corner suitably furnished dolls, buggies, dress up and small utensil to prompt imagination and pretend play.
- Book units were situated in each rest area to encourage individual quiet time and relaxation.
- Walls of the care room were decorated with birthday charts, family photographs and posters.
- Both care rooms had access to secured outdoor play areas which had safety matted areas, lawned areas and a hard course for the use of ride on toys.
- There was a wide range of ride on toys, playhouses, picnic benches, a mud kitchen, balance apparatus, see saws and slides to encourage the children to master gross motor skill play.

Supporting Relations around the Children

- The staff members were observed to be kind, patient and caring to each child as observed during caring duties, facilitating play and one-to-one engagement.
- Only low tones were used during communication with the children.
- Some staff members had recently undertaken Trauma Informed Practice training to enhance childcare skills.
- The staff members were observed providing verbal hand overs at collection time in addition the service operated a digital application to communicate with parents both individually and via group.

- Community fundraising activities included Trick or Treat in November 2022 where monies had been raised for worthy causes.
- Templates were maintained in the creche to inform parents on a daily basis of their child's eating habits toileting and rest times taken.

Implementation of Programme of Care.

- The service provided a play-based programme of care.
- A pictorial daily timetable displayed in the playschool evidenced that sufficient time allocated for free play, outdoor play, meals, rest and relaxation.
- Scrap books were reviewed which detailed the children's arts, crafts and progress reports completed during the year.

Non-Compliance Information

Basic Needs of the Children

From the outset of inspection on the 29 August, it was observed that the television volume was up loud until lunch time in the creche. It was not being listened to by the children or not seen to be part of the programme of care.

Media such as television, videos and radio must only be used as part of the planned curriculum and accompanied by adult commentary as background noise overwhelms the senses and concentration spans of young children.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Documentation Submitted

The manager stated that a policy has been developed setting out clearly when TV and media are to be used during the children's attendance. Staff members have been trained in this respect.

Summary Comment

The policy outlining the uses of TV and media in the service was submitted to the early years office, it was examined and found to meet the Requirements.

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

- Bright Beginnings operated a healthy eating policy which stipulated that all food items were to be provided by the children’s families.
- Most of the lunches and snacks observed being eaten were found to be nutritious and healthy for example, sandwiches, rice cakes, ham and cheese wraps, fruits and yogurts.
- Most of the children attending on a part time basis were observed eating additional meals as per the service policy.
- Most of the children attending the creche on a full day care basis were seen to be eating hot dinners such as pasta bakes, lasagne and stews.
- Children in both the creche and the playschool had access to their own labelled water bottles to counter thirst.
- Plates, place mats and cutlery were available to the children as required.

Non-Compliance Information

A child attending the creche on a full day care basis was observed to be eating insufficient and unvaried food items. In conversation with a staff member, it was stated that the child had a rice cake and 2 cracker biscuits for each meal. This was at variance with the service healthy eating policy.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action & Documentation

The manager stated that the service healthy eating policy has been issued to parents and guardians and that going forward the staff will work in partnership with them to improve poor eating habits.

The manager submitted a healthy eating policy and evidence of communication with parents to provide written information regarding food and drink items eaten daily.

Summary Comment

The documentation submitted to the early years office was reviewed and found to meet the Requirements.

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 premises was suitably secured to prevent children from exiting the service unsupervised.
- Visitors were required to be checked in so unauthorised access was restricted.
- Some of the internal doors were suitably secured, for example the kitchen door.
- Emergency exits were unobstructed.
- Staff members personal belongings were store out of reach of the children.
- Cables and flexes were not accessible to the children.
- Openable windows were not accessible to the children and roller blinds did not require secured brackets.
- Cleaning products were out of reach of the children.

Infection Control:

- Sanitising units were placed out of reach of the children for adult use.
- The children had access to sufficient child sized toilet and child height installed wash hand basins. They were clean and well maintained.
- Step ups and potties were available.
- Additional sink units were installed in the care room to provide additional facilities for hand washing and clearing up after messy play.
- There was a designated nappy changing room which was furnished with 1 nappy changing unit and mat. There was a wash hand basin.
- There were 2 child sized toilets available to the children in the playschool with a suitable number of wash hand basins.
- The wheelchair access toilet was used by the adults. An additional nappy changing unit designed for older children was wall mounted and found to be clean and well maintained.
- Thermostatically controlled hot water was available and reregistered at 29.2 degrees Celsius throughout the service.

- Liquid soap, and paper towels were available for hand washing purposes and strategically places hand washing posters were visible to the children to prompt the correct hand washing technique.
- Spare clothes were stored in labelled bags.
- Non-contact bins were available for the storage of used nappies.
- Protective gloves and a single use apron dispenser were available to the staff members.
- Non-contact pedal bins were situated throughout the service.
- Tissues were available to the children for nasal hygiene.

Administration of Medication:

- It was reported that the staff members were familiar with the procedures that are to be followed in the event of a child requiring medications.
- There were currently no children attending the service that required medications.

Safe Sleep:

- The service provided a separate sleep room furnished with 3 standard cots that were suitably spaced and away from fall hazards such as the adult chair and linen storage box.
- Sleep room temperatures were within the recommended range and registered at 20.8 degrees Celsius.
- Fans had been installed in preparation to reduce warmer temperatures.
- The room was suitably dimmed, there were no blinds.
- The cots had well fitted mattresses.
- Clean bedding and blankets were provided, and it was stated that each sheet and blankets were laundered after each use.
- A child was observed being settled, shoes and tight clothing were removed, and the child was placed on his back and gently soothed to sleep.
- Sleep records were reviewed and found to be correctly maintained; detailing 10-minute physical checks observing the child's position, colour and breathing.
- Stackable beds and fitted individual linen were available for the children attending on a full day care basis that required a sleep.

Fire Safety:

- The fire door was unobstructed.
- Fire cylinders were tethered to the walls.

- In conversation with the person in charge it was reported that staff were familiar with the procedures that are required to be followed in the event of a fire

Outing:

- It was reported that outings had resumed post Covid-19 pandemic. Children transitioning to national school had enjoyed a visit to a nearby town and miniature railway.

Non-Compliance Information

Infection Control:

The following issues posed a risk of cross infection –

1. Children in the creche room were not supervised to wash hands prior to lunch time.
2. Both the child and adult did not wash hands after nappy changing.

This was highlighted in the previous inspection outcome report dated 30 May 2022.

The CAPA response stated that staff members have been trained to wash hands after nappy changing.

3. The nappy changing unit and mat was not sanitised after nappy changing.
4. On inspection of the toiletries stored in the nappy changing room it was found that some products were unlabelled, such as nappy barrier creams and lotions; some items belonged to children no longer attending the service and the storage space was cluttered and grubby.
5. The nappy bin in the nappy changing room was unsuitable as it required contact to dispose of a nappy.
6. The table in the creche room was not sanitised prior to lunchtime
7. The highchair covers were dirty; 1 highchair had particles of food in the seams. In addition, the highchair straps were stained and dirty.
8. The yellow chair positioned in the creche room, which was used for comforting and nurturing was stained, worn and dirty.
9. The play mats in the playschool room were stained and dirty.
10. A toilet brush was accessible to children in the wheelchair access toilet.

This issue was a non-compliant issue at the last inspection.

In the CAPA response it was stated that toilet brushes will not be accessible to the children.

11. In conversation with a staff member it was reported that the cots were not sanitised after use.

12. A dummy was stored in a cot and on close inspection of the drawer stowing dummies and comforters it was observed that there were spare dummies which were not suitably contained and not labelled with the child's name.

13. The water table in the outdoor play area was dirty.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation

Infection Control:

The manager stated the following –

1.&2. Hand washing practices have been reinforced to both staff members and children.

An amended hand washing policy was submitted along with photographs of newly installed hand washing posters at wash hand basin. In addition, staff members counter signatures to evidence that training has been received.

3. The nappy changing policy was submitted to evidence that it stated that the changing unit was to be sanitised after use.

4. The cubby space has been decluttered and cleaned and unused toiletries have been discarded.

A photograph of the cubby space was issued.

5. A photograph of the newly purchased non-contact nappy bin was submitted and it was stated that staff members have been trained to use this nappy bin going forward.

6. A cleaning schedule evidencing that tables are to be cleaned after messy place, prior to and after meals was submitted. In addition, a photograph of clean tables with products used was forwarded.

7. A photograph of clean highchairs was submitted along with a cleaning schedule to evidence that they have been cleaned and will be cleaned on a regular basis.

8. A photograph of the yellow chair situated in the creche which is used for nurturing was submitted to evidence that it had been deep cleaned. A photograph of products used was also issued.

9. A photograph of a clean playmat was submitted and it was stated by the manager that it has been added to the cleaning schedule for regular cleaning.

10. The toilet brush has been removed from the toilet and going forward will not be accessible to the children.

11. A policy stipulating the regularity of the cleaning of cots was submitted. Also, a signed template by staff members to evidence that they have undertaken training and are aware of this new practice.

12. Children's soothers/dummies are now stored in individual labelled containers. A photograph of the stowed items was submitted.

13. The water table has been cleaned and added to the daily cleaning schedule for checking and cleaning.
A photograph of the leaned apparatus was forwarded.

Summary Comment

Each of the documents forwarded to the early years office to evidence that the non-compliances had been addressed were reviewed. They were found to satisfactorily meet the Requirements.

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

(2)(a) & (b)

Both the care rooms had well stocked first aid boxes which were out of reach of the children but accessible to the staff members.

Non-Compliance Information

(1) It was established that there was no adult on the premises on the 29 August with the required First Aid Responder training (FAR)

An Immediate Action Notice was issued to the registered provider on the 05 September.

Corrective and Preventive Action & Supporting Documentation Submitted

(1) The manager responded to the IAN within the 24-hour allocated time frame and stated that a course has been booked for 3 staff members to attend first aid responder training on the 06 September (the following day). An invoice was attached to evidence booking details and payment.

Summary Comment

Documentation in the form of an invoice was submitted to the early years office to indicate that 3 staff members would be attending the necessary training. More importantly it informed that at any given time there would be enough trained adults on the premises to ensure the children's safety.

The Requirement has been met.

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.

Compliance Information

(1)

(a) The service had a displayed template in the playschool which informed that the most recent fire drill had taken place on the 28 July 2023.

(b) A record was in place which detailed the number, type, and maintenance record of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarms. The most recent fire safety and security service had taken place in February 2023.

(4)

Fire evacuation diagrams were displayed throughout the service to provide visual guidance of the procedures that are to be followed in the event of a fire.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

An up-to-date insurance certificate was displayed to indicate that up to 37 children were insured to attend the service on a full day care basis.

The expiry date was 27 February 2024.