

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC308
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<b>Name of Service:</b>	Nurture Childcare and Early Learning Centre
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<b>Address of Service:</b>	Bessboro Road, Blackrock, Cork, Co. Cork
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<b>Eircode:</b>	T12CS83
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<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Ciara Gallagher
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<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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<b>Date(s) of Inspection:</b>	13/01/2025
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<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	82	PM	71
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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>	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).

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

Nurture Childcare and Early Learning Centre is a purpose built full daycare facility which opened in 2009 which is based in a urban area of Cork city. The service has 6 care rooms (Baby, Wobbler, Toddler and 3 upstairs Montessori rooms. The service also has an enclosed outdoor area. It is registered to cater for children aged 0 to 6 years of age. The service is a play-based setting operating from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

### Staffing

The Registered provider was not service based on the day of inspection. The service had employed 23 people, including 2 people in charge and the chef.

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

The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under Regulations 9: Management and recruitment, Regulation 10: Policies and Procedures, Regulation 11 staffing, Regulation 15: Record of a pre-school child, Regulation 16: Record in relation to pre-school service, Regulation 19: Health, welfare and development of child, Regulation 20: Facilities for rest and play, Regulation 23: Safeguarding health, safety and welfare of child,

Regulation 25: First Aid and Regulation 28: Insurance. On inspection, additional non-compliance which posed a risk was identified under Regulation 29: Premises. These findings are outlined within the relevant regulations 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 registered provider, persons in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

## 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 appointed 2 persons in charge; to oversee the operation of the service and a named person was available to deputise.

(b) A person in charge was on duty at the service when the inspectors arrived. Two people in charge were available during the inspection and for the closing meeting. The staff roster indicated that a person in charge was available at the service during the hours of operation.

(c) There was clear evidence on inspection of the management structure in place and the specific roles of each staff member.

(2) Of the 23 adults present at the time of inspection, only 16 adults were subject to inspection, as the other employment records were reviewed at the previous inspection which took place on the 11 April 2024.

(a) Of the 32 required references, 26 were from previous employers with records of validation on file.

(b) Of the 32 required references, 6 were from a source other than an employer with records of validation on file.

(c) Garda vetting disclosures had been obtained for all 23 adults employed in the service. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years.

(d) Of the recruitment records reviewed, documented evidence indicated that 10 staff members lived outside the jurisdiction for longer than six consecutive months, while over the age of 18 years old and the 10 required Police vetting were obtained and were on file.

(4) The recruitment records reviewed demonstrated that 16 staff had achieved at least a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 on the National framework of Qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

## 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:

- Infection control policy.
- Administration of medication policy.
- Nappy changing policy.
- Preparation of powdered formula and breastmilk 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 inspection, there were adequate adults available for the direct care and supervision of the children.

(2) Minimum adult child ratios were observed in all care rooms, over the duration of the inspection as follows:

Morning:

Room name and age range of the children	Number of children present	Number of adults present
Baby room	6	3
Wobbler room	10	2
Toddler room	13	3
Montessori 1	18	2
Montessori 2	17	3
Montessori 3	18	2

Afternoon:

Room name and age range of children	Number of children present	Number of adults present
Baby room	5	3
Wobbler room	9	2
Toddler room	15	3
Montessori 1	12	2
Montessori 2	15	2
Montessori 3	15	2

(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) A sample of 23 records of early years children attending the service were reviewed. These were found to contain all the particulars inclusive of (a) to (i) referred to in paragraph 1.

## 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:*

*(k) details of any accident, injury or incident involving a pre-school child attending the service.*

#### Compliance Information

(1)

(k) The inspector reviewed a sample of 22 accident and incident records from 2024, and all contained the required 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,

#### Compliance Information

On the day of inspection, the following information was obtained through direct observation and discussion with the staff and examination of relevant documents.

#### Basic needs:

- The layout of the care rooms supported the children to move freely within their environments, and to actively engage in their chosen tasks. Children in the baby room were observed to be free to move and learn to walk in a safe place.
- Children within all the care rooms were observed partaking in outdoor play throughout the day.
- Nappy changing was carried out regularly throughout the day and as required by each child. Nappy changing was observed to be respectful, and staff and children were observed chatting.
- Meals and snacks were prepared on the premises by the chef and were observed to be healthy and nutritious. Pasta, cheese and garlic bread were served for dinner and ham and cheese wraps for afternoon snack. It was observed that some parents and guardians provided meals for children in the baby room, and these were stored in a refrigerator.
- The inspectors were informed that some children throughout the service had specific dietary requirements. These requirements were communicated to the designated chef and staff were aware of the procedures in place on the serving of these meals by the use of colour coded crockery.
- Suitable cutlery was provided in each care room along with appropriate seating in the form of highchairs, suitable tables and low-level chairs.
- During mealtimes, the staff sat with the children and assisted as required. The children were given sufficient time to enjoy their food, and conversation was encouraged by staff.
- Water was accessible to the children throughout the day in each care room.
- Children had unrestricted access to the toilets and were seen to access sanitary facilities independently with the supervision of staff.

- Spare clothing was available for children if required. A staff member was observed dealing with a child who had wet clothing and was observed to be sensitive and caring in their interactions with the child.
- The staff 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 baby room, the staff immediately comforted them. It was evident that staff were meeting the needs of the children.
- The individual sleep needs of young children were met, and this was observed on the day by children sleeping at various intervals in the baby room. Older children in the Montessori rooms had a rest area provided and staff in Montessori rooms informed the inspector that they had access to stackable beds if required.

### Supporting Relationships:

- All children were observed to be actively encouraged by staff to participate in activities. Materials and resources were available which accommodated each child's individual needs such as puzzles, plastic bricks, books and a sand and water table.
- The service used a software technology application to provide information to the parents in relation to updates on the children's day at the service, providing photos and written information.
- Staff informed the inspector in the baby room that they worked in partnership with the parents in relation to sleep plans and altered these if needed in conjunction with the parents.
- Photo were displayed on the walls in the care room which promoted a sense of family for the children.
- The adults in the care rooms were noted to interact with the children in a caring manner throughout the inspection. Staff were observed to support children to engage positively with their peers.
- Staff engaged with the children in both group and individual activities by getting down to their level and maintaining eye contact while discussing, questioning and helping children with their chosen tasks. This was seen in Montessori 1 when staff read a book to the children who listened attentively and in the baby room when doing puzzles.
- Staff encouraged communication and language development through discussing topics of interest with the children and encouraging the child to expand on the discussion of these topics, for example the inspectors observed children discussing seasons and what you may wear.

## 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-*

*(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) (b)

- The baby room and wobbler room were equipped adequately with cots maintained at the correct distance apart. Each child that sleeps in the baby room had an assigned cot.
- The temperature of the sleep room for the children under 1 years old was recorded at 18.8°C and the wobbler room for children aged 18 months to 2 years old was 18°C.
- Staff were noted to maintain sleep records in relation to the children’s colour, breathing and position. Children were observed to be checked every 10 minutes and information was recorded on the software technology app and also in paper format.
- Children were seen by the inspector to have a sleep time plan. The staff informed the inspector in the baby room that if a child is showing tiredness and requires sleep, rest is facilitated, and parents/ guardians are informed.
- A cosy area was available in each Montessori care room and staff in Montessori 1 informed the inspector, that stackable beds were available for use if needed.
- Cellular blankets were observed in use during sleep time.
- Waterproof protectors were placed on mattresses and were adequate.

## 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 door was secured. This restricted unauthorised access to the building and prevented the risk of children exiting unsupervised.
- The windows in the care rooms were adequately secured to ensure the safety of the children.
- Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children.
- The toys and play equipment assessed were in good condition and were free from pinch and crush points.
- The outdoor areas were safe and secure spaces for children with fences and gates. This prevented children gaining unsupervised access to unsafe areas.
- The equipment assessed in the outdoor area was in good condition and was stored in storage units.
- Risk assessments were completed on a daily basis to ensure the safety of the outdoor areas.

##### Infection Control:

- Handwashing facilities were accessible to the children with warm running water, liquid soap, paper towel and air dryers.
- The temperature of the warm water and sanitary accommodations were recorded between 22.6°C and 37.3°C.
- Children were observed to wash their hands before meals and after outdoor play.
- Lidded pedal bins were in use for the disposal of waste in the sanitary areas and care rooms.
- Children's coats and bags were stored off the ground.
- A refrigerator was available in each room for the storage of perishable foods.

##### Administration of Medication:

- Medication was not observed to be administered to the children on the day of inspection. Care plans were reviewed for children with specific needs and staff were aware of the procedures to carry out in the event of a medical emergency.
- Temperature reducing medicines were stored in original boxes out of reach of children. The medicine inspected was in date.

##### Fire Safety:

- Fire exits were noted to be free from obstruction.
- All fire extinguishers seen were wall mounted.

### Outing:

The person in charge stated they do not carry out any outings with the children in the service.

### Non-Compliance Information

#### General Safety:

1. An adrenaline autoinjector for one child in the Montessori room who required medication in the event of an emergency was not stored in the service. This posed a risk to the child.
2. The adrenaline autoinjector for one child in the Montessori room was stored in the child's bag and was easily accessible to the children. This posed a safety risk to the children.
3. Decorative string was hanging from the blind in the toddler room which posed a risk to the children. It is acknowledged that a staff member removed the string when asked by the inspector.

#### Infection Control:

4. The inspector observed in the sanitary area of the toddler room that four children did not wash their hands after nappy changing and toileting. This posed a risk of cross infection to the children and staff in the care room.
5. In the sanitary area of the Montessori room, a potty had not been emptied after use and was accessible to other children using the sanitary facility. This posed a risk of cross infection to the children and staff in the care room. It is acknowledged that a staff member emptied and cleaned the potty at the request of the inspector.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

The following statement was made by the registered provider:

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

#### General Safety:

- 1 An adrenaline autoinjector is labelled and stored in the care room out of reach of the children.
2. The child's bag is now stored where it is not accessible to the children and emergency medicine is stored in the care room out of the reach of the children.
3. The decorative strings are now removed.

#### Infection Control:

4. One child at a time now accesses the sanitary or nappy changing area and are assisted with handwashing as needed. Staff training has been updated in relation to nappy changing and toileting.
5. The children's potty's are emptied and cleaned after each use and the policy has been updated to support this.

### **Supporting documentation submitted**

#### **General Safety:**

1. The statement from the registered provider has been accepted.
2. The statement from the registered provider has been accepted.
3. The statement from the registered provider has been accepted.

#### **Infection Control:**

4. The updated policy was submitted.
5. The updated policy was submitted.

### **Summary Comment**

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

## **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) Evidence was available to demonstrate that 2 of the adults employed in the service held a current first aid responder (FAR) certification and at least one of these adults were rostered to work at the service during the hours of operation.

(2)

(a) There were sufficiently stocked first aid boxes available in the service, which was safely stored out of reach of children.

(b) The first aid supplies were accessible all times, should they be required.

### Part VI - Safety

#### Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

#### Compliance Information

The insurance certificate indicated that sufficient cover was in place for the provision of a full day care service, and the policy was valid from the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2024 until the 27<sup>th</sup> of March 2025.

### 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*

#### Non-Compliance Information

(d)  
The inspectors noted unclean floors in the care rooms, hall and stairs. The inspectors also observed dusty areas in wobbler sleep room. This was at variance with the cleaning record which showed it was completed daily. Unclean areas can increase the risk of infection to the children.

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

The following statement was made by the registered provider:

##### **Corrective and Preventive Action**

The service has now employed a cleaner.

##### **Supporting documentation submitted**

The statement from the registered provider has been accepted.

#### Summary Comment

The response from the registered provider was deemed to meet regulatory compliance under Regulation 29. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.