

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

## Pre School

<b>Not TUSLA Identifier:</b>	TU2015CC308
------------------------------	-------------

<b>Name of Service:</b>	Nurture Childcare and Early Learning Centre
-------------------------	---

<b>Address of Service:</b>	Bessboro Road, Blackrock, Cork, Co. Cork
----------------------------	--

<b>Eircode:</b>	T12 CS83
-----------------	----------

<b>Name of Registered Provider:</b>	Ciara Gallagher
-------------------------------------	-----------------

<b>Service type:</b>	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
----------------------	--------------------------------

<b>Date of Inspection:</b>	10/05/2023
----------------------------	------------

<b>No of pre-school children:</b>	AM	82	PM	66
-----------------------------------	----	----	----	----

<b>Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:</b>	Early Years Inspectorate, Administration Building, St. Mary's Health Campus, Gurranabraher, Cork. T23X440.
<b>Inspection undertaken by:</b>	C. Stokes & E. Friel
<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>	Not Applicable
---------------------------------	----------------

### Description of service

Nurture Childcare & Early Learning Centre is a purpose-built full day care facility, which opened in 2009 with 6 care rooms (baby, wobbler, toddler and 3 upstairs Montessori rooms). It is registered to cater for children aged 0 to 6 years of age. The service is a play-based setting operating Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm.

### Staffing

The registered provider is not service based. There were 22 adults employed at the service on the day of inspection. There was one adult working as a floating staff member, one AIM support, one administrator and a chef. The two persons in charge worked directly with the children, covering staff breaks.

### 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/ 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.

## Acknowledgments

The inspectors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of the persons 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.

(3) The procedures specified in paragraph (2) shall be carried out prior to any person being appointed, assigned or allowed access to or contact with a child attending the pre-school service.

(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) There were two designated persons in charge and two named adults available to deputise in the service.
  - (b) The persons in charge and the two deputies were on the premises when the inspectors arrived. Staff rosters indicated that either the persons in charge or the deputies were available on the premises when the early years children were present.
  - (c) Staff were aware of the management structure in the service and the roles and responsibilities of each person.

- (2) One of the persons in charge confirmed that 3 adults had begun working at the service since the previous inspection undertaken on 26 September 2022, therefore recruitment records in relation to these adults along with the two regular contractors were reviewed.
- (a) (b) There were ten validated references from past employers and sources other than past employers.
- (c) Garda vetting disclosures from the National Vetting Bureau were available for all five adults.
- (d) International police disclosures were available for four adults who had lived outside the State for a period of six consecutive months or longer.
- (3) All documentation required for paragraph 2 was in place prior to the adult's commencing employment in the service.
- (4) Qualifications were in place for three of the five adults working directly with the children. All three held a Major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 6 or above or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent. The two contractors did not require an Early Childhood Care and Education qualification.

## 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-two pre-school records of children attending the service were sampled. Each were found to contain the required particulars (a-i) above.

### 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) 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 all times during the period of the inspection the registered provider ensured that there were an adequate number of adults working directly with the children.
- (2) The ratio of adults to children was adequate in all playrooms. On the day of inspection, all 6 care rooms were in operation. There was one floating member of staff and the two persons in charge were assisted with staff cover at breaks.

Room/ age range	Adults	Children (am)	Children (pm)
-Baby (0-1 years) (over 1 year)	3	6	6
-Wobbler (1-2 years)	3	12	12
-Toddler (2-3 years)	3	14	12
- Montessori 1 (2 years, 8 months-5 years)	3(am), 2(pm)	20	12
-Montessori 2 (2 years, 8 months-5 years)	3 (am) 2 (pm)	21	16
-Montessori 3 (2 years, 8 months-5 years)	1	9	8
Total		82	66

(8) (a) There were at least 2 adults available on the premises throughout the duration of the inspection, and at all times in accordance with the staff roster.

## 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:

- Mealtime and snack time was observed to be a pleasant and social experience. Adults placed a tablecloth on the tables and adults talked to and assisted the children as required. The atmosphere was relaxed and not hurried. Individual placemats were observed in some of the rooms.
- The children (upstairs) were largely independent using the toilet and were supported appropriately by the adults to use the toilet, according to the child's stage of development. Where children were in nappies in the baby, wobbler, and toddler rooms they were observed to be changed regularly and sensitively with staff talking to the child and explaining in advance that their nappy will be changed.
- The adults provided for each child's comfort and each child's need for sleep, rest, and relaxation. For example, two sleep rooms off the baby room were in place for the babies to sleep on demand where 8 cots were provided. In the baby room, the adults worked with parents and guardians in relation to the babies sleep patterns from home. The wobbler room had a designated sleep room with 9 cots adjacent to their room where children were facilitated with either one or two rest periods in the day according to their need. Children in the toddler room had individual stackable beds and slept after their hot lunch in their playroom. Children in the upstairs Montessori rooms did not have a sleep routine but rest facilities appropriate to the children's age were provided in each room, and the adults advised that they facilitate children to rest as needed.
- Children's need for mobility was met with both the indoor and outdoor play observed to be in use for all rooms from babies upwards in age. Children in each room were observed to play outdoors twice or more during the day. In respect of the babies, they were observed to have the doors to the outside open to facilitate free movement between indoors and outdoors which allowed for an element of choice and the staff were observed to facilitate this and follow the children's individual interests and play preferences.

- Children were encouraged and supported to interact positively with each other. The adults emphasised the importance of communication and building skills in children to find solutions to their own problems. Younger children for example, babies and wobblers were supported to participate and settle into the daily routine of the service.

## 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-

- 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
- 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) There were adequate and suitable facilities for each child to play indoors and outdoors. The indoor environment of each play room was laid out in defined interest areas. The setting had developed these interest areas and had future plans to further enhance these areas since the previous inspection of September 2022. The setting also had plans to enhance the outdoor environment with natural materials and develop a mud kitchen to provide developmentally appropriate, stimulating and challenging outdoor opportunities for the children in attendance.

(1, b) There were three sleep rooms on site. Two adjacent to the baby room with 8 cots (7 in use as 1 was broken) and one sleep room off the wobbler room with 9 cots in place. A supply of stackable beds was in place for children attending the toddler room. The upstairs Montessori rooms had access to stackable beds as required but there was no sleep routine in these rooms.

### 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

- On the day of inspection, spaghetti bolognese was the main hot meal of the day. Cucumber, hummus, cream cheese, and breadsticks/crackers was the afternoon snack. The mid-morning snack was a fruit selection. The breakfast offered was toast and wheat biscuit cereal.
- Meals and snacks were served not more than 3 hours apart.
- The meals/snacks were prepared in the designated kitchen by the chef.
- A detailed menu plan of all meals/snacks was available for inspection.
- The service carefully managed dietary requirements as different coloured placemats were observed to be used to indicate children with special diets and allergens were listed on the menu plan.
- A healthy eating policy was in place and observed to be followed on the day of inspection.
- In the baby room, a number of babies had their snacks/meals and formula provided by their parents' guardians. These were observed to be stored and prepared appropriately within the kitchenette of the baby room.

#### Non-Compliance Information

Drinks such as water were not readily available in the downstairs rooms outside of set meal/snack times without a child having to request these from the adults. Independent access to the children's drinks was not facilitated with the drinks bottles stored in a box on the countertop in the wobbler room and cups and water being stored on the counter in the toddler room out of the children's reach. Adults were not observed to offer children their drinks outside of the set meal/snack times in these care rooms.

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

##### Corrective and Preventive Action

The registered provider responded to state that there is a water station now in place all day in the wobbler and toddler rooms and staff record drinks offered to the children.

##### Supporting documentation submitted

Photographic evidence of the water stations was submitted together with the water policy which was signed by adults and the water intake record sheet.

#### Summary Comment

The response of the registered provider meets regulatory compliance for this regulation.

### 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 external doors were appropriately secured to prevent children from exiting unsupervised and to restrict unauthorised persons from gaining access to the service.
- The outdoor area was secured.
- Blind cords were secured.
- Cleaning equipment and chemicals were observed to be secured.

##### Infection Control:

- Liquid soap, paper towels/electric hand dryers were in place for hand washing/drying.
- Pedal operated lidded bins were available for waste disposal as required.
- Several care rooms had windows open for ventilation.

##### Administration of Medication:

- No medication was observed to be administered on the day of inspection. Staff advised that where a child had an autoinjector pen for anaphylaxis that staff had specific training in the administration of this in case of an allergic reaction.

##### Safe Sleep:

- Sleep checks were recorded on an online application by staff while children sleep every 10 minutes the sleep checks were also recorded in writing in the baby and wobbler rooms.
- There was sufficient space between the cots in both the baby, wobbler sleep rooms (50cm). Floor markings were in place in the wobbler room to ensure the 9 cots were sufficiently spaced. The person in charged advised that the floor markings would be updated as they had faded in the wobbler sleep room.

##### Fire Safety:

- No serious fire safety concerns were noted as escape exits were unobstructed.

##### Outing:

- No outings were observed on the day of inspection.

#### Non-Compliance Information

### Safe Sleep:

1. On the day of inspection, the temperature in the wobbler sleep room exceeded the safe temperature range of 16 to 20 degrees Celsius. It measured 22 degrees Celsius while in use by sleeping wobblers. In the baby sleep room, directly after its use by a sleeping baby the temperature measured 21.6 degrees. This is of concern as a high wobbler sleep room temperature was brought to the attention of the person in charge in the morning and the window was opened to reduce the temperature, however it was found to be 22 degrees when measured again in the afternoon when in use. The sleep room temperatures were recorded 3 times a day, records showed that temperatures recorded were within the accepted range, however this was not the case when checked on inspection.

### Infection Control:

A number of issues relating to a lack of hot water and poor handwashing practices were found on this inspection and were also noted in the previous inspection of September 2022. In the response to this report the registered provider agreed that hot water was available at all sinks for children to wash their hands and that hand washing would occur after nappy changing and this process would be monitored by randomised checks. These corrective and preventative actions have failed to prevent the issues reoccur as listed under points 2 and 3.

2. There was no supply of hot water at a number of sinks for the children to wash their hands. The temperature at the toddlers sinks was 24 degrees Celsius. At the Montessori 2 sinks the temperature measured 19.9 degrees Celsius. At Montessori 1 sinks the water measured 24.5 degrees Celsius. This may lead to the spread of infection as a lack of hot water impedes handwashing.
3. Handwashing was observed to be substituted by the use of hand wipes at key infection control times for example, in the baby room after nappy changing wipes were used instead of handwashing, in the wobbler room before meals and snacks handwashing was not observed, wipes were used and in the toddler room after outdoor play and before meals/snacks no handwashing was observed, wipes were used as an alternative. Handwashing (with thermostatically controlled hot water and soap) when substituted by wipes may lead to the spread of infection.
4. A cushion in the baby room was found not to have a cover, this may lead to the spread of infection as it could not be adequately cleaned.
5. All 13 children's chairs in the wobbler room were observed to be in a poor hygienic state from dried in food, and this may lead to the spread of infection.
6. The stackable beds in the toddler room were stored within the room, this creates both the potential for the spread of infection and a safety concern from children climbing.

7. A stackable bed was found to be stored in a cot in the wobbler sleep room which may lead to the spread of infection.
8. In the wobbler sleep room one mattress was observed to be in poor condition with foam exposed. The person in charge replaced this mattress on the day of inspection. There were two torn mattress covers observed in the baby sleep room. These three mattresses could not be adequately cleaned and may lead to the spread of infection.
9. A toilet brush and an unfinished pipe casing, which presented as an unfinished step were observed in the toddler toilet area which may lead to the spread of infection.

### Action submitted by the Registered Provider

#### Corrective & Preventive Action

##### Safe Sleep:

1. The registered provider responded to state that the air conditioning is turned on at 8am each morning and left on until the children have finished sleeping.

##### Infection Control:

2. Mixer taps were installed on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023 to remedy the hot water supply issue according to the registered provider.
3. Sinks for hand washing were installed on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2023 in the wobbler and toddler rooms according to the registered provider.
4. The cushion in the baby room was removed and replaced according to the registered provider.
5. The wobbler chairs were cleaned and placed on cleaning rota with steamer. All chairs are cleaned and wiped after each meal. These are part of the daily checks by the manager / assistant manager according to the registered provider response.
6. The stackable beds have been removed from the room and are now stored in the hallway according to the registered provider.
7. The stackable bed was removed from the cot in the wobbler sleep room.
8. New mattress covers are now in place.
9. The toilet brush has been removed from the toddler toilet according to the registered provider.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

##### Safe Sleep:

1. The registered provider submitted photographic evidence to indicate that the sleep room temperatures show that the room is within the acceptable range of 16 to 20 degrees Celsius.

**Infection Control:**

2. Photographic evidence was provided in response to each issue of noncompliance 2 to 9 above.

**Summary Comment**

The response and evidence provided by the registered provider was assessed and it was deemed to address the issues of noncompliance listed in this regulation.

**Part VII - Premises and Space Requirements**

**Regulation 29 - Premises**

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

- (a) of sound and stable structure,*
- (b) safe and secure,*
- (c) kept adequately lit, heated and ventilated*
- (d) cleaned, maintained and repaired, as required, and*
- (e) equipped with adequate and suitable sanitary facilities.*

**Compliance Information**

- (a) From visual inspection the premises appeared of sound and stable structure, well-finished and weather tight.
- (b) From visual inspection the premises appeared safe and secure. Appropriate security systems with an intercom system at the front door managed unauthorised entry and unsupervised exit of children from the service.
- (e) An adequate ratio of toilets and nappy changing was in place for children as a 1 to 11 ratio was in place. For adults there were 3 adult toilets, and a 1 to 8 ratio was in place.

Room	Toilets/changing units	location
Baby	1 changing unit/ 1 sink	Baby nappy changing area

Wobbler	2 changing mat/2 sinks	Wobbler nappy changing area
Toddler	2 changing mat (2 designated sinks for adults) plus 2 toilets and 2 sinks for children	Beside their room
Montessori 1	3 toilets/sinks 1 nappy changing unit/sink	Beside their room In Montessori 1
Montessori 2	3 toilets/sinks	Beside their room
Montessori 3	1 toilet/sink	In the room

### Non-Compliance Information

(c) On the day of inspection, the temperature in the wobbler room measured 22.6 to 23 degrees Celsius which is beyond the maximum temperature range of 18 to 22 degrees Celsius. Issues with the wobbler room temperature were highlighted in the previous inspection reports of September 2022 and August 2021. The corrective action submitted by the registered provider that staff would monitor the room temperature and use the air conditioning system to control the room temperature failed to prevent a recurrence of this non-compliance.

(d) On the day of inspection a number of issues regarding maintenance were identified. The floor covering was lifting in Montessori 3 toilet area. There was one broken cot in the baby sleep room which was not in use and had not been removed. The fridge and furniture in the wobbler room was not clean, some wooden furniture cabinets were chipped and not presented in a clean and hygienic condition, with hand marks, paint and dusty remnants of where sticky tape had been removed.

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

#### Corrective and Preventive Action

(c) The registered provider advised that air conditioning is used in all rooms now and set to 18 degrees which maintains the rooms at a constant temperature. The service does not rely on windows being open to maintain the cooler temperatures. Daily and hourly checks performed by management and staff. Signs on wall are in place to indicate the correct temperature in the room.

(d) The registered provider stated that the maintenance issues have been addressed and that staff have been reminded to bring all maintenance issues to the attention of management.

#### Supporting documentation submitted

The registered provider submitted photographic evidence to indicate that the issues raised in this regulation have been addressed

# Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report Pre School

## Summary Comment

The response and evidence provided by the registered provider has been assessed and deemed to meet the regulatory requirements of this regulation.