

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015CW007
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Name of Service:	Borris Community Playschool Ltd
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Address of Service:	Respond Building, Oak Tree Court, Borris, Co. Carlow
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Name of Registered Provider:	Leonora Laffan
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Service type:	Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	17/10/2025
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No of pre-school children:	AM	27	PM	N/A
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Tusla Child and Family Agency, Early Years Inspectorate, Ely Hospital, Ferrybank, Wexford.
Inspection undertaken by:	E Mc Garry
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
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Description of service

This community service was established in 1999. It is a respond community service. The service is located in a housing estate just outside Borris in south county Carlow. The service is registered to provide a sessional service for children aged 3 to 6 years of age. The premises is a purpose-built childcare facility. It has two preschool rooms, toilets, an office, kitchen, entrance hallway and a large outdoor play area to the rear of the premises.

Staffing

There are nine staff employed in the service including a person who works in administration and a person who is employed to carry out maintenance in the service. The registered provider does not work directly with the children. All staff working directly with the children held a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

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 d The inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations,

Regulation 9 Management and Recruitment (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (d) (4),

Regulation 10 Policies and Procedures,

Regulation 11 Staffing levels (1) (2),

Regulation 17 Information for parents

Regulation 21 Equipment and Materials

Regulation 22 Food and Drink

Regulation 23 Safeguarding Health, Safety, and Welfare of the Child,

Regulation 25 First aid (1) (2) (a) (b),

Regulation 26 Fire Safety (1) (a) (b) (4).

Regulation 28 Insurance

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 inspector wishes to acknowledge the cooperation of the person in charge, staff and children who were present on the day of the inspection.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that-

- (a) the service has a designated person in charge and a named person who is able to deputise as required,
- (b) at all times during the period when the pre-school service is being carried on, the designated person in charge or the named person referred to in subparagraph (a) is on the premises, and

(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)(b)

The manager was the person in charge on the day of the inspection. There was a person available to deputise when the manager was absent.

(2)(a)(b)

Following a discussion with the manager and on review of documentation, it was established that there were 9 staff employed in the service. Written and validated references were available on file for all staff working in the service.

(c)

There was Garda vetting available on file in the service for all staff members. The service demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice to renew Garda vetting every 3 years for all staff.

(d)
Police vetting was available on file for three staff members who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months.

(4)
There were qualifications on file for all staff working directly with the children. These staff held an award in Early Childhood Care and Education at Level 5 and above on the National Qualifications Framework.

Non-Compliance Information

There was one staff member who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months who did not have police vetting available on file in the service for that country

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

Police vetting for one staff member who had lived in a state other than Ireland for a period of longer than six consecutive months has been requested by the service and will be sent to the inspector when received.

Supporting documentation submitted

Evidence the service has requested police vetting to be obtained was received by the inspector.

Summary Comment

The response and evidence submitted, once completed, is satisfactory to meet the requirements of The Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016.

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

There were policies and procedures specified in Schedule 5 in place in the service. The policies reviewed on this inspection were the policy on infection control and the policy for healthy eating in the service.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

(1) Subject to this Regulation, a registered provider shall ensure that there is at all times an adequate number of adults working directly with the children attending the pre-school service.

(3) Subject to paragraph (5), a registered provider of a sessional pre-school service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 2 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) therefore at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1)

There was an adequate number of staff working directly with the children attending the preschool service for the duration of the inspection.

(3)

At 11:00 there were 27 children aged 2 to 6 years of age in the care of 5 staff.

Part IV – Information and Records

Regulation 17 – Information for parents

A registered provider shall ensure that a parent or guardian of a child proposing to attend the service is provided with the information referred to in subparagraphs (a) to (g) of Regulation 16(1).

Compliance Information

The parents of children attending were provided with a printed parent handbook before their children attended the service. The inspector reviewed the information given to them. The service provided parents with information as required under regulation 17. The information provided for parents contained an outline of the healthy eating policy, the hours of operation, curriculum development policy, contact details and the facilities available within the service. There was also information included on funding schemes available for parents to avail of.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 21 – Equipment and materials

A registered provider shall ensure that there is adequate and suitable furniture, play and work equipment and materials available on the premises of the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The materials and equipment available included a large range of developmentally appropriate equipment, arts and crafts materials and other open-ended materials which were well organised and easily accessible to children. Both rooms were resourced for the play and learning of the children.

The small room to the left of the front door was set up for the younger children. There was a window seat for the children to sit on while looking out to the garden, there was a dress up area with costumes for the children to enjoy free play, there was a kitchen with utensils also.

The big room extended the length of the service. Staff had divided this room with low level shelving to provide areas of interest for the children. There was a shop area, a fairy wall, and a rest area which had a supply of reading books in an accessible shelf. There was original artwork displayed “owl babies “and self-portraits done by the children were displayed in the room.

The outdoor area was extensively developed with equipment and materials for the enjoyment of the children. There was an outdoor mud kitchen, picnic tables, a large gym with ladders and a slide and other equipment to support imaginative play. There was a track for children to ride balance bikes in the area. There were helmets provided for the children to wear to protect their heads if they fell. There was a small house with a large dolls house inside, there was a wooden wig wam for the children to play in. Staff had made a bus stop with a covering to shelter from the rain there was an original bus timetable printed and laminated to protect from the rain on the side of the shelter.

There was a sensory garden to the side of the service which contained a path made of different tactile surfaces such as stones, and beads cemented into the path. There were herbs growing which provided pleasant aromas for the children to experience.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 22 – Food and drink

A registered provider shall ensure that adequate and suitable, nutritious and varied food and drink is available for each pre-school child attending the pre-school service.

Compliance Information

The service had a healthy eating policy in place in the service. The snacks were provided by the parents of the children and stored in the fridge in the service. The children were observed enjoying a range of nutritious snacks on the morning of the inspection. There were sandwiches, diced fruit and vegetables, yogurt rice cakes and water for the children to drink.

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

The manager had taken the following steps to ensure the safety of the children attending the service.

General safety:

Access to the service was gained through the front door which was made of glass. Staff could verify the people who were visiting the service before opening the door to them. Cleaning agents were stored out of reach of the children. The outdoor play area to the rear of the service was safe, suitable and secure.

Infection control:

The service appeared to be clean on the day of inspection. There were cleaning templates in place to demonstrate that daily cleaning had taken place in the service. There was a fridge available in the service to store the snacks provided by parents for the children. All sinks for hand washing in the service were equipped with warm thermostatically controlled water, and liquid soap.

Accident and Incidents

The service had an accident and incident policy in place in the service. Staff who spoke to the inspector were aware of their responsibilities in relation to the policy in place. Accident and incident reports reviewed by the inspector were signed by the parents as per the services policy.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 25 - First aid

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that a person trained in first aid for children is, at all times, immediately available to the children attending the pre-school service.

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that a suitably equipped first aid box for children-

(a) is safely stored in an easily accessible and conspicuous position on the premises, and

(b) is available to the children attending the pre-school service at all times.

Compliance Information

(1)

There was a person trained in a first aid responder course immediately available to the children attending the preschool service. There were 6 staff working directly with children who were trained in a first aid responder course which is an adequate number to cover the rota in the service.

(2)(a)(b)

There was a suitably equipped first aid box stored in an easily accessible position on the premises and was available to the children attending the preschool service.

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 firefighting 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)

There was a template in place in the service to record any fire drill that takes place in the service. The last fire drill took place in service in September 2025.

(b)

There was a record in place to demonstrate the number, type and maintenance of firefighting equipment. This maintenance was carried out in February 2025. The smoke alarm in the service was last serviced in September 2025.

(4)

There was a notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire displayed in a conspicuous position in the main entrance of the service.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

There was adequate insurance in place to cover the number of children the service was registered to accommodate.