

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL013
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Name of Service:	Bocan Community Creche
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Address of Service:	Bocan, Culdaff, Co. Donegal
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Eircode:	F93 CYK1
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Name of Registered Provider:	Michael Doherty
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Service type:	Full Day, Part Time, Sessional
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Date of Inspection:	30/09/2024
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No of pre-school children:	AM	44	PM	30
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Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Nexus Building, Floor 2, Blanchardstown Corporate Park, Dublin 15 D15 CF9K
Inspection undertaken by:	G.Fagan, K. Folan
Title:	Early Years Inspectors

Authority to Inspect

The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).

Conditions if applicable	Not applicable
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Description of service

	Child Care Act 1991 (Early Years Services) Regulations 2016 and Childcare Act 1991 (Early Years Services) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 QMS Ref: EYI-RRT12.1 V2.0 03/03/2023 Service ID: TU2015DL013	1 of 16
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Bocan Community Creche is a not-for-profit service situated in a rural part of County Donegal, near the town of Culdaff. The service is registered to provide full day, part time and sessional care to children aged 0-6 years and is open from 8am to 6pm. The service is also registered to provide school age care. The service operates from a single-story, purpose-built premises. There are 3 care rooms currently in operation, the wobbler room, junior pre-school room and pre-school room. The baby room is not operational at present. There is one sleep room with 5 cots. The baby room is currently being used for multipurpose, including sleep time for children in the wobbler and junior pre-school rooms. There is a nappy changing room which facilitates two nappy changing stations as well as a sensory room beside the junior wobbler room. There is a log cabin outside of the main building, beside the covered playground to facilitate small group work and feeding school age children hot meals. There is a total of four garden spaces available to the pre-school children on the premises, a covered outdoor area that the wobbler room and junior pre-school children can access directly from their rooms. The covered outdoor area was the only outdoor space used on the day of inspection. There is a fenced garden with a mud kitchen, sand pit and climbing frame beside the covered outdoor area and an open yard area, where the preschool children can access it directly from their room. To the front of the property there is a net covered garden space with football goals and climbing ladders, this space is beside another fenced space housing a polytunnel. There is a kitchen on site where meals and snacks are prepared.

Staffing

There were 32 adults employed in service at the time of inspection. This included a manager, relief staff, caretaker, kitchen staff and staff on employment activation programmes. There were 25 adults working in the service on the day of inspection, 1 manager, 15 Early Years Practitioners, 3 adults on employment activation programmes, 1 kitchen staff member. There were also four students on placement on the day of inspection. The Registered Provider is not on the premises on a daily basis. The manager is the person in charge and there was a named deputy person in charge available on the premises.

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 inspection focused on an examination of compliance under regulations 9, 11, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 25.

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 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
- (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)(b)(c)

There is a clear management structure in place. The manager is appointed as the person in charge and was on the premises for the duration of the inspection. The deputy manager is assigned to deputise in the managers absence.

2(a)(b)

Of the 39 files reviewed 38 had two written references from a previous employer and/or a reputable source.

(c)
Of the 39 files reviewed 38 had garda vetting. The service also demonstrated compliance with the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. However, the service did not always adhere to the re-vetting timeframes as outlined in the Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Notice, requiring services to renew Garda vetting every three years. Please refer to the information outlined under Regulation 23 of this report

(d)
Of the 39 files reviewed, 27 files did not require international police vetting and 6 had international police vetting on file.

(4)
Evidence was available to confirm that 24 employees whose files were reviewed and who work directly with the children in the service, including the service manager, held an appropriate childcare qualification at Level 5 or higher on the National Framework of Qualifications or a qualification deemed by the minister to be equivalent.

Non-Compliance Information

2(a)(b)

1. One file had no evidence of references from a previous employer or reputable source,
2. Seven references from a reputable source and/or a previous employer were not validated.

(d)
3. Four files did not have adequate information on file to determine if international police vetting was required.
4. One file that required international police vetting did not have evidence on file for inspection.

(4)
5. Two staff members who worked directly with children in the service did not have a certificate of their qualification on file for inspection.

Corrective & Preventive Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective and Preventive Action

1. &2. -Validated references are now on file.
3. 4 CV's were updated to include adequate information.
4. International police vetting is now on file.
5. Verification of qualifications is now on file.

Supporting documentation submitted

1. &2. -Outstanding validated references provided.
3. Four CV's were updated to include adequate information.
4. International police vetting provided. for relevant staff member.
5. Verification of qualifications was provided for two staff members.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 9 have been adequately addressed.

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)
- On the day of inspection there were an adequate number of staff members working directly with the children attending the service. Upon arrival in the service there were 11 adults working directly with 44 children.

(2)

The adult child ratios were correct when the inspectors arrived unannounced and remained accurate throughout the day.

- The wobbler room had 10 children between the ages of 1 year and 6 months and 2 years and 2 months being cared for by 2 staff members
- The Junior Pre-school room had 15 children aged between 2 years and 2 months and 3 years and 9 months being cared for by 4 staff members.
- The pre-school room had 19 children aged between 3 years and 6 months and 4 years and 6 months being cared for by 5 staff.

The manager of the service was based in the office on the day of inspection.

(8)

Two adults were present on the premises at all times, as evidenced in staff rosters and discussion with staff members in the service.

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

1 (a)

Basic Need

- Staff explained that meals and snacks are provided by the service and there is a healthy eating policy in place. Young children had the opportunity to feed themselves and assistance was provided where needed. Bibs were provided for the children in the wobbler room whilst eating. Staff ensured the children's faces were cleaned when required.
- At mealtime, highchairs with safety harnesses were provided for 2 children in the wobbler room and child sized tables and chairs were available for the remainder of the children in the service. Meals took place in the care rooms and the children moved around freely once they had finished eating. Staff advised the

inspector that water was available to the children outside of mealtimes should they request it. Child sized utensils were provided at mealtimes.

- Aprons were provided for messy play for example painting activities.
- Nappy changing was carried out on a schedule and more frequently if required. Nappy changing was carried out respectfully and staff were observed using this time for warm one on one interaction with the children. Children were observed to use the sanitary accommodation independently with staff providing support when required. Suitable outdoor wetsuits were available in the service for playing outdoors in cold weather.
- Staff informed the inspector that the sleep needs of younger children were met on demand, and this was demonstrated on the day of the inspection when a younger child displayed sleep cues before lunch, the child was assisted to sleep in a separate room by one staff member and was given their meal on waking up.
- Staff advised that older children were placed to sleep for a scheduled period of rest in the afternoon, in line with the children's home routine and in consultation with parents. Staff were observed placing children to sleep and remaining with the children, giving comfort to assist them to sleep.
- Soft furnishings such as nursery chairs and armchairs were available in each of the sleep rooms. Soft music was played in the cot room while the children slept.
- The lighting in both sleep rooms was dim to create an ambient atmosphere and still allow for adequate sleep checks to be carried out.
- Individual inclusion plans were implemented in line with the children own needs. The plans detailed the current needs of the children, the interventions needed by the staff to always ensure the child's learning and development in the service.

Supporting relationships

- Staff interacted with the children warmly and praised children for acquiring a new skill, such as mastering the slide. The interaction between the adult and child was appropriate to the child's age and stage of development. Staff described events that occurred during the day for example, a young child found a spider in the outdoor area and the staff member described the spider and initiated "Incy Wincy Spider" with the children.

- Positive behaviour was encouraged in the service with staff in the wobbler room observed using age-appropriate distraction techniques and offering alternatives when minor disagreements over toys occurred.
- A spirit of teamwork was evident in the service with staff sharing information about children's care needs and collaborating on art and craft activities.
- Children's identity and belonging was supported in the service by the inclusion of family walls at the children's height. A birthday wall with the children and staff pictures were on display. Children's coats and bags were stored on individual hooks with the children's name and pictures to help children identify their belongings.

Physical environment

- The playrooms in the service were well-resourced with a variety of play-based materials and equipment suitable for the age and stage of children attending each room. Toys and materials that promoted multiple areas of development including, gross motor, fine motor, cognitive and language development were available to the children in each of the care rooms.
- Resources and activities were easily accessible to the children on low level open shelving and children demonstrated familiarity with navigating their environment to independently access the toys, equipment and materials they chose to play with.
- Child sized tables and chairs were available to the children in the service.
- The children engaged in a variety of child led and adult led activities such as nursery rhyme time, story time and painting.

Part V - Care of Child in Pre-school Service

Regulation 20 – Facilities for rest and play

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

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

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

(3) A registered provider of a full day care service, a part-time day care service or a childminding service, other than such a service to which paragraph (2) applies, shall ensure that-

(a) a suitable, safe and secure outdoor space to which the pre-school children attending the service have access on a daily basis is provided on the premises, or

Compliance Information

1 (a)

The space was adequate for the number of children attending the service.

- The space was divided to allow for different interest areas such as home corner, “Bocan” restaurant, sensory trays and tabletop toys and building blocks in the preschool rooms.
- A sensory room containing a bubble tube wall, low lighting, soft cushions and other sensory equipment was utilised to facilitate small group or one to one time.
- The wobbler room was arranged into different interest areas to cater to a young child’s learning and development. There was a sand try with buckets, shovels and trucks and a home corner with a kitchen. Low level shelves allowed for the children to reach toys such as push and pull toys and puzzles. A soft matted area was provided for children to rest and looked directly on to the outdoor area. Child sized tables and chairs were provided for table top activities.
- All playrooms led directly onto outdoor areas. Staff advised that groups had a timeslot to the outdoors, and this was evidenced on the day of inspection.
- The service provided a covered outdoor area which contained both a hard surface and soft fall surface and upon discussion with staff it was evidenced that each group had access to twice per day in all

weather. There was adequate ride on toys and trikes, slides, hula hoops and wall puzzles for the children using the service. A log cabin was used to provide children with the opportunity to play in small groups.

1 (b) Adequate and suitable rest facilities were available for preschool children to rest during the day if required.

- The service provided for the sleep needs of children with the provision of two sleep rooms which consisted of one cot room and one sleep room with stackable beds.
- The cot room consisted of five wooden cots with waterproof mattresses. The cots were spaced adequately apart to allow staff to move around to check on children. Each child had their own cot. Individual sleep linen and cellular blankets were provided by the service for each child.
- A nursery chair was available in the cot room for staff to remain in the room whilst supervising the children.
- The toddler sleep room contained nine stackable beds for children from both the wobbler room and junior preschool. Each child had their own bed and sleeping bag sheet. Children over the age of two who required a lightweight blanket from home as a comfort were facilitated.
- There was a large foam armchair for staff who remained in the room while the children slept. Sleep checks were recorded every 10 minutes.
- For older children who did not require sleep, a rest area was available in the junior and senior preschool 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

Upon discussion with the cook and staff explained that the service provides snacks and meals, which are prepared on site. Children with allergies are asked to bring in specific items such as cheese or milk alternatives.

The service has a healthy eating policy in place.

On the day of inspection, the menu consisted of:

Breakfast: Porridge, fruit, brown toast and beans, milk and water.

Dinner: Mince Stew with mashed potatoes.

Snack: Bread rolls with ham and cheese. Served with fruit, milk or water.

Evening snack: Crackers and fruit.

- A 4-week menu and a daily menu were displayed. In cases where children had known allergies, parents provided alternatives to the service such as non-dairy milks.
- Children in full day care were provided with the 2 meals and 2 snacks, one of which was a hot meal. Staff advised the inspector that an alternative is provided if the child refuses the meal for any reason.
- There was an adequate amount of food available and children who requested more were given extra.
- Staff advised that drinking water is provided for children outside of mealtimes should the children request a drink.
- Bottled milk was safely stored in a thermostatically monitored fridge and was inaccessible to children.
- Children who had allergies were clearly identified on lists in each room and staff advised that parents sent in alternative food items where required. This was also confirmed by the policy of the service.

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 internal main entrance door was secured on the inspector's arrival to the service and remained secured throughout the inspection preventing children from leaving the building unnoticed and unauthorised persons from accessing the area.
- The Kitchen area was inaccessible to children on the day of inspection.
- The covered garden area that was in use on the day of inspection was enclosed and staff ensured the gates were closed and secured with the bolt lock. The gates leading to the covered outdoor play area were closed securely to ensure children could not leave the area unattended.
- The window restrictors looking out onto the carpark in the wobbler room were in working order.
- The outdoor sink had a cushioned surround to cover sharp edges.

Infection Control:

- Pedal bins were in use and in working order in the care rooms and nappy changing room.
- The nappy changing mats were in a good state of repair with no obvious tears.

- The changing mats were covered in a plastic type of material to allow for easy cleaning.
- The cot mattresses had waterproof covers and were in good repair.
- Staff advised bedding is laundered weekly or more often if soiled.
- Two children had sleep bags which parents provided, and the tog value and sizing were relevant to the room temperature and age of the child.
- Soothers were stored in individual labelled containers when not in use.

Safe Sleep:

- The children sleeping in the cot room were checked every 10 minutes by a staff member. This was recorded on a sleep sheet in the wobbler room.
- For the children sleeping on stackable beds, an adult remained with the children for the duration of their nap time in the room where they were sleeping- adjacent to the cot room.
- Comforters were removed once the children fell asleep.
- The temperatures in the cot room and baby room that is currently being used as a sleep room were within the required safe sleep temperatures during sleep time. The service monitored the temperature by means of a wall thermometer. Staff carried out physical sleep checks every ten minutes and recorded the time, temperature of the room, position, colour and breathing of the child. These records which were available on the day of inspection

Non-Compliance Information

General Safety:

1. One file had no garda vetting available. This is not in line with the protocol of May 2023.
2. A child, without a therapeutic intervention recommendation, was observed using a small trampoline in the sensory room. Trampolines are prohibited unless, a child has a clear therapeutic intervention recommendation for using such an item.
3. A large orange frame in the covered garden space at the back of the premises was not being used for its purpose, resulting in a pre-school child tipping it over causing a risk to injury to the other children in the garden at the time. Staff said it belonged to another item and they join together which prevents them from being tipped over.

Infection Control:

4. One staff member was observed not changing gloves after the wet nappy was removed from the child on two separate occasions. The same pair of gloves remained on the staff member for the duration of the

nappy change. Upon discussion with the staff member regarding the nappy changing procedure as well as reviewing the policy, some staff are not clear that gloves should be changed once the used nappy is removed from the child and disposed of. The same gloves remained on the staff member while the staff member dressed the child and wiped down the changing mat leading to poor infection control measures.

5. The nappy changing mat was soiled at the foot of the mat after the staff member had wiped it down. Thorough cleaning of the changing mat is required each time it is used to reduce the risk of cross contamination.
6. In the nappy changing room, there are two nappy changing mats beside each other to accommodate two children being changed at the same time. A shower curtain divides the two nappy changing stations. The shower curtain is not suitable for the nappy changing area as it cannot be easily cleaned. Upon discussion with staff and reviewing the cleaning schedule in the nappy changing room, there was no evidence that the shower curtain is washed routinely.
7. A staff member was observed heating a bottle of milk in a microwave which is not permitted as this can cause hot spots in the milk which poses a risk of scalding to a child's mouth.

Action submitted by the Registered Provider

Corrective & Preventive Action

General Safety:

1. Outstanding Garda Vetting now on file.
2. Guidance for staff has been provided on the use of the Therapeutic trampoline and a risk assessment has been drawn up and displayed in sensory room.
3. Frame connected to second part of the frame to make it more secure and playhouse added to the risk assessment.

Infection Control:

4. Staff were reminded of nappy changing procedures and service will review nappy changing policy and procedures with staff annually.
5. Nappy changing mat cleaned down thoroughly.
6. Shower curtain has been removed and an alternative wipeable divider has but put in place.
7. Staff have been informed that bottles cannot be heated in the microwave.

Supporting documentation submitted

General Safety:

1. Outstanding Garda vetting provided.
2. Evidence of risk assessment and rules for use of the trampoline provided.
3. Photographic evidence of complete playframe provided and risk assessment that includes the checking of the playframe provided.

Infection Control:

4. Nappy changing procedure provided.
5. Photos of the nappy changing mats were provided.
6. Photographic evidence that shower curtain has been removed and proposed alternative divider was provided.
7. Notice for staff informing them not to use the microwave was provided.

Summary Comment

The inspector has reviewed the actions and evidence submitted. The non-compliances identified under Regulation 23 have been adequately addressed and will be reviewed on the next inspection.

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)
- On the day of inspection there were nine staff who were First Aid Responder (FAR) trained. Upon review of the staff roster it was evident that there were FAR trained staff members were immediately available all times to the children on the day of inspection.

(2)(a)(b)

The main first aid box was located in the nappy changing room, out of reach of children and available to the children if required.