

Early Years Inspectorate Regulatory Report

Pre School

TUSLA Identifier:	TU2015DL109			
Name of Service:	New Beginnings Pre-school			
Address of Service:	Eleaghbeg, Burnfoot, Co. Donegal			
Eircode:	F93 HF53			
Name of Registered Provider:	Deirdre Lynch			
Service type:	Part Time, Sessional			
Date(s) of Inspection:	16/06/2025			
No of pre-school children:	AM	20	PM	-
Address of the Early Years Inspectorate:	Donegal Early Years Inspectorate, St. Conal's Campus, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. F92 TD92			
Inspection undertaken by:	L Mc Glynn			
Title:	Early Years Inspector			
Authority to Inspect				
The Tusla Early Years Inspectorate carries out inspections of Early Years Services under Section 58(J) of the Child Care Act 1991 (as inserted by Section 92 of the Child and Family Agency Act 2013).				
Conditions if applicable	Not applicable			

Description of service

New beginnings preschool is located in the border area of Burnfoot on the Inishowen peninsula in County Donegal. The service is currently registered to provide a morning sessional and part time service from 9.00am to 12.00md and 9.00am to 2.00pm. The children attending the service are aged between 2 and 5 years. The service operates from a single storey detached building located within the grounds of the registered providers dwelling house. There is one playroom with adjacent sanitary accommodation. A kitchen, office and storage facilities are also on site. The service has a spacious outdoor play area that is directly accessible from the preschool room.

Staffing

There are three staff members currently employed within the service all of which work directly with the children. The registered provider is the designated person in charge and is on the premises on a daily basis.

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

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 9 – Management and recruitment

(2) A registered provider shall ensure that each employee, unpaid worker and contractor is suitable and competent taking into consideration the nature of the needs of children, including by-

- (a) consideration of references from the person’s past employers, if any, and in particular the most recent employer, if any,*
- (b) consideration of references from reputable sources in the case of a person who has no past employers,*
- (c) consideration of the vetting disclosure received from the National Vetting Bureau of the Garda Síochána in accordance with the Act of 2012 in respect of the person, and*
- (d) ensuring, insofar as is practicable, that where a person has lived in a state other than the State for a period of longer than 6 consecutive months, he or she provides police vetting from the police authorities in that state.*

(4) A registered provider shall ensure that, without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (2) and subject to paragraphs (5) and (6), each employee working directly with children attending the service holds at least a major award in Early childhood Care and Education at Level 5 on the National Qualifications Framework or a qualification deemed by the Minister to be equivalent.

Compliance Information

(2) In respect of the above-listed elements of Regulation 9, the recruitment records in relation to the three staff members employed in the service were reviewed during the inspection.

(a) There was two written and validated past employer references for one staff member and one past employer reference for a second staff member.

(b) There were two references from a source other than a past employer on file for one staff member and the second reference for another staff member was from a source other than a past employer. These references were accepted as documentary evidence demonstrated that the staff members held no other past employment.

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

(4) Documentary evidence was provided to demonstrate that the three staff members had obtained a major award in Early Childhood Care and Education at level 5 or above on the National Framework of Qualifications.

Part III – Management and Staff

Regulation 11 - Staffing levels

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

(2) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), a registered provider of a full day care service or a part-time day care service shall ensure that at all times the minimum ratio of adults to children specified in column (3) of Part 1 of Schedule 6 opposite a particular reference number specified in column (1) of that Part in respect of the age range of the children specified in column (2) thereof at that reference number is satisfied.

Compliance Information

(1) There was a sufficient number of adults working directly with the children. On the morning of the inspection, there were three adults working directly with 20 children aged 2-5 years.

(2) There were three adults working directly with 20 pre-school children. There were 12 children attending the sessional service and 8 children remaining in the service for part time care.

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 play equipment and materials both indoors and outdoors was safe and suitable for the children attending. Resources were well maintained, clean and in good condition. The equipment in the preschool room was laid out in defined interest areas to facilitate meaningful play activities and experiences. Areas that supported children’s imaginary play included a kitchen/home area, doll and baby care resources, wheeled toy/vehicle area and a train table. There was a wide range of wooden blocks of varying shapes and sizes to provide construction/block building/problem solving opportunities for children. Creative and linguistic development was encouraged through a library area, junk and art materials and a large water tray provided for sensory play. A selection of tabletop equipment was also readily accessible on open, low-level shelving alongside resources to promote cognitive and problem-solving skills such as shape sorters, pegboards, magnets, plastic and wooden blocks. The play materials in the interest areas were supplemented with both play and real-world items. Couch seating provided a comfortable area where a child could rest or relax. There were ample supplies of additional equipment to allow for toy rotation and the room contained adequate child sized tables and chairs for each of the children attending. There was adequate storage of cleaning equipment, files and personal belongings out of reach of children. Children had access to an enclosed outdoor play area which was partially roofed with a large awning to allow outdoor play in all weathers. The outdoor area was safe and well maintained. The area was sufficient in size to accommodate a large group of children to engage in gross motor physical play such as ball games, cycling, running and jumping. Play equipment in the area included wooden balance beams, swings, tyres and a range of ride on bikes and trikes.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 24 - Checking in and out and record of attendance

(1) A registered provider shall ensure that each pre-school child attending the service is checked in and out of the service by an employee or an unpaid worker.

(3) A registered provider shall ensure that-

(a) no person other than-

(i) pre-school child attending the service,

(ii) a person dropping or collecting such a child,

(iii) an employee, or

(iv) an unpaid worker, can enter the premises without his or her entry being approved by an employee, and

(b) a daily record in writing is kept of the entry on the premises of any such person.

Compliance Information

(1) The service maintained a written record of children's attendance each day. A review of the attendance records demonstrate accurate arrival and departure times were recorded by staff.

(3) (a) (b) A daily written record was kept of visitors to the service which the inspector was requested to complete during the 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) There were two staff members with in-date training in first aid for children, both of which were rostered to be on the premises at all times during the hours of operation.

(2) (a) (b) A first aid box was available within the preschool room in a location accessible to staff for use if required. The box was adequately stocked with the required supplies for the number of children attending the 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 fire fighting equipment and smoke alarms in the premises.*

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of fire shall be displayed in a conspicuous position in the premises.

Compliance Information

(1)

- (a) There was a written record of fire drills that had taken place with the children which were detailed monthly.
- (b) There was documentation detailing the number and type of the firefighting equipment and smoke alarm system in the building. The firefighting equipment was last serviced in September 2024 and the smoke alarms tested in October 2024.

(4) A notice of the procedures to be followed in the event of a fire was displayed at the entrance door.

Part VI - Safety

Regulation 28 - Insurance

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

Compliance Information

Documentation was available to demonstrate that the service was adequately insured for up to 22 children attending the service on a sessional or part time basis with an expiry date in March 2026.